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THE

PRACTICAL WORKS

OF THE

REV. RICHARD BAXTER.

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OF THE

REV. RICHARD BAXTER.

VOLUME XXIII.

CONTAINING

THE SAINT'S EVERLASTING REST (*The Third Part continued*); THE SAINT'S EVERLASTING REST (*The Fourth Part*); THE CONCLUSION; BROUGHTON IN THE CONCLUSION OF HIS 'CONSENT OF SCRIPTURE;' A POEM OF MASTER G. HERBERT, IN HIS 'TEMPLE;' AN ADDITION TO THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER OF THE THIRD PART OF THE SAINT'S REST; TO THE READER.

CONTENTS

OF

THE TWENTY-THIRD VOLUME.

THE SAINT'S EVERLASTING REST.

THE THIRD PART CONTINUED.

SEVERAL USES OF THE FORMER DOCTRINE OF REST.

PAGE

CHAP. XI. A more exact inquiry into the number and use of marks; the nature of sincerity; with other things of great moment in the work of self-examination..... 1

XII. Use 4.—The reason of the saints' afflictions here 53

XIII. Use 5.—An exhortation to those that have got assurance of this rest, or title to it, that they would do all that they possibly can to help others to it also 71

XIV. An advice to some more specially to help others to this rest, pressed largely on ministers and parents 114

THE FOURTH PART.

A DIRECTORY FOR THE GETTING AND KEEPING OF THE HEART IN HEAVEN.

To the inhabitants of the town of Shrewsbury 173

The Introduction..... 174

CHAP. I. Use 6.—Reproving our expectations of rest on earth 177

II. Use 7.—Reproving our unwillingness to die 191

III. Motives to a heavenly life..... 217

IV. Containing some hinderances of a heavenly life .. 264

PAGE

CHAP. V. Some general helps to a heavenly life 291
VI. Containing the description of the great duty of heavenly contemplation..... 308
VII. Containing the fittest time and place for this contemplation, and the preparation of the heart unto it..... 317
VIII. Of consideration, the instrument of this work; and what force it hath to move the soul 338
IX. What affections must be acted, and by what considerations and objects, and in what order 344
X. By what actings of the soul to proceed in this work of heavenly contemplation 367
XI. Some advantages and helps for raising and affecting the soul by this meditation 374
XII. How to manage and watch over the heart through the whole work..... 399
XIII. The abstract, or sum of all, for the use of the weak 405

THE CONCLUSION 415
Broughton in the conclusion of his 'Consent of Scripture,' concerning the New Jerusalem, and the everlasting Sabbatism, meant in my text, as begun here, and perfected in heaven 460
A Poem of Master G. Herbert, in his 'Temple' 463
An Addition to the Eleventh Chapter of the Third Part of the Saint's Rest 466
To the Reader 474

THE

SAINT'S EVERLASTING REST.

THE THIRD PART, CONTINUED.

CHAP. XI.

A more exact Inquiry into the Number and Use of Marks; the Nature of Sincerity; with other things of great moment in the work of Self-examination.

SECT. I. It is a matter of such inexpressible consequence for every man to make sure work in the great business of his salvation; it being so easy, so ordinary, and so dangerous to be mistaken, that I think fit yet to add some further advice, to help men in the trial of their own states. There is no Christian that hath any care of his soul, or any belief and true sense of the matters of eternity, but must needs be very solicitous in inquiring, 'How he may know what will become of him for ever and ever?' and be glad of a clear, undeceiving direction for the discovery of this. As I lay under seven years' doubting and perplexity of spirit myself, much through my ignorance in the managing of this work, so was I very inquisitive still after signs of sincerity, and I got all the books that ever I could buy, which laid down evidences and marks of true grace, and tended to discover the difference betwixt the true Christian and the hypocrite or unsound; I liked no sermon so well as that which contained most of these marks; and afterward, when I was called to the ministry myself, I preached in this way as much as most. I have heard as many complaints of doubting, distressed souls as most: and had as many that have opened their hearts to me in this point; of whom many have proved the most humble, self-denying, mortified Christians; and many that were deepest in doubtings and distress, upon trial of their lives, I found also deepest in pride, peevishness, unmortified lusts, and unfaithful walking, which did feed their troubles. Upon this

long experience of myself and others, and most serious study of this point, and prayer to God for his direction, I think it but my duty to open yet more fully, for the benefit of others, what I have herein discovered, which is necessary for them to understand in this weighty work: for one error here may put the hearts and lives of godly people quite out of frame, and may do much to the confirming of the wicked in their presumption and self-deceit. I shall therefore lay down what I conceive to be the truth, in certain propositions.

Sect. II. Prop. 1. A sincere Christian may attain to an infallible knowledge of his own sincerity in grace, or his performance of the conditions of the covenant of life, and consequently of his justification, adoption, and title to glory; and this without any extraordinary revelation.

This proposition I have proved before, and therefore need to say no more to it now. I lay it down here by way of caution to prevent mistakes; lest any should think that I am against an attainment of assurance here, because of some passages following.

Sect. III. Prop. 2. This infallible knowledge is not properly a certainty of faith, as too many divines affirm.[a]

This also I have proved before in opening the nature of assurance, and in the Appendix of my Aphorisms of Justification; and Mr. Wotton de Reconcil., and very many learned divines of late, have confirmed it fully. Proper certainty of faith is, when a man, by mere believing, is sure of the truth of the thing believed: this, therefore, leaneth fully on a divine testimony. But there is no divine testimony revealing, that such or such a man's sins are pardoned, or he justified. The testimony of the Spirit is but partly by giving us the conditions of the promise, which is our evidence, and partly helping us to see them, and conclude from them, and take comfort therein: and so it witnesseth with our consciences, by causing our consciences spiritually and effectually to witness. But this testimony is not the object of faith; it is only God's testimony in Scripture which affords us a certainty of faith, properly divine, in this point.[b] Though in

[a] Lege Amesii Coron. de art. v. cap. 1. corol. vi. vii. p. (mihi) 88. eadem quæ Theolog. in Synodo Dord.

[b] Supposing that other ways of revelation are ceased. Assensum quippe nostrum afficiunt fidei catholicæ articuli, ut principia immediata, ac prima. Fides autem subjungitur per modum assumptionis. Illius ergo quæ hanc persuasionem facit, conclusionis non potest esse firmitudo major, quam quæ præmissarum debiliori inest. Subsumptio illa autem experimentalibus nititur

other cases natural discoveries may be truly called a divine testimony in a larger sense; yet this is above nature: now, God's word doth only say, he that repenteth and believeth shall be pardoned, and justified, and saved: but nowhere saith, that you or I shall be saved. Object. But, you will say, as long as we may know that we believe, is it not all one? Answ. No: for God's word tells me not that I believe; therefore this must be known by reflection and internal sense, and not by believing. He that believeth he doth believe, believeth himself and not God; for God nowhere telleth him so: so then it is beyond doubt, that assurance, as I said before, ariseth from the conclusion; one of whose premises is in the word of God, and must be believed; the other is in our own hearts, and must be felt or known; and therefore the conclusion is mixed, and to be deduced by reason, and is not an object properly of divine faith, or of any faith at all. There is but one objection that seems to me to have any appearance of strength, to take with any reasonable man; and that, some think, cannot be answered. And thus they argue: Whatsoever we ask of God through Christ, according to his will, we must believe we shall receive: but we ask justification and glory of God according to his will, through Christ: therefore we must believe we shall receive them. Answ. This makes not our justification and salvation, to be upon certainty of faith. For, 1. The major proposition doth only express a conditional promise of justification and salvation, and no absolute promise. Now, a conditional promise puts nothing in being till the performance of the condition, nor gives any certainty but on such performance. The condition here expressed is, that we ask, and that we ask according to God's will; which implies many other conditions; for it must be in faith and repentance, and to right ends, not "to consume it on our lusts," saith James, and we must be certain that we are sincere in all this, before we can, upon this conditional promise, have a certainty: 2. So that the minor proposition here, that we thus ask according to God's will in true faith, &c., this no Scripture speaks; and therefore must be known otherwise than by believing: 3. Yet we may be said to believe we shall receive, in reference to the major proposition or promise in Scripture, which is an object of our belief.

judiciis, per privatam hominis conscientiam pensitatis. Quæ cum nonnunquam in dubium vocentur, an sint signa genuina, et sæpe tentationum nube occultentur, ne ad præsens solatium effulgeant, quid mirum si non, &c.—*Theolog. Britan. in Synod. Dord. Suffrag.* ad art. v. thes. 3, &c.

Sect. IV. Prop. 3. Though infallible assurance, as aforesaid, may be here attained, yet perfect certainty in degree cannot, nor may lawfully be by any man expected.[c]

This also I have proved before. For if we may be perfect in the degree of assurance, why not of all grace as well; and so have no sin? nay, there are so many graces exercised in producing our assurance, besides reason itself, that if they be not first perfect, it is impossible that assurance should be perfect. For example: He that believeth not in perfection the truth of Scripture, and of that promise, that "Whosoever believeth shall be saved;" 2. And he that knoweth not in perfection the sincerity of his own faith, neither of which any man breathing doth do; cannot possibly be perfectly certain that he is justified, and shall be saved: for who can be perfectly certain of the conclusion, who is but imperfectly certain of the premises? And yet I have met with some men that think themselves very learned and spiritual, that confidently dispute for a perfection in assurance. If any man say, that Bellarmine meant as much as this imperfect certainty, when he grants a conjectural certainty; and be sure that he speaks truly; I will like Bellarmine the better, and his opposers in this the worse, but I will like a plain, necessary truth of God never the worse. Sure I am that our great divines affirming, that we are sure of salvation by a certainty of faith, hath given the papists fearful ground to baffle them and play upon us, and triumph over them. And when their own students and followers find it so, it hardens them against us fearfully. And as sure I am that no man is perfect gradually in this life in any grace, much less in so high a point as his assurance. Among all those consciences that I have had opened to me, I never met with a humble, heavenly, upright Christian, that would say, he was perfectly certain; nay, and but few, that durst call their persuasion a certainty, but rather a strong hope: but some licentious, fantastical disputers, I have heard plead for such a perfect certainty; whose pride and loose living, and unmortified passions and corruptions, told the standers-by, that they were the farthest from true certainty of any.

Sect. V. Prop. 4. Though in some cases it may be useful to

[c] Read of this our British divines in the Synod of Dort. in suffrag. ad art. v. thes. 2, 3; excellently and moderately, as they did in all. The conclusion follows the weaker part of the premises, say logicians. Vide Smigletii Logicam Disp. xiii. quæst. 8. 12, 13. Ubi strenue probatur, præmissæ alterius debilitatem, semper et in omni materia, redundare in conclusionem.

name several marks; yet the true, infallible marks of sincerity, which a man may gather assurance from, are very few, and lie in a narrower room than most have thought.

As I would not pick quarrels with the most godly divines, who lay down many marks of sincerity in their sermons and books; so would I not, in foolish tenderness of any man's reputation, be so cruel to the souls of poor Christians, as to hide the truth from them in so weighty a point: and I speak against no man more than myself heretofore. I know ordinary Christians cannot discern how these multitudes of marks do lie open to exceptions; but the judicious may easily perceive it. I shall therefore here tell you the truth, how far these many marks are commendable and convenient, and how far they are condemnable and dangerous. And, 1. When we are only discovering the nature of some sin, rather than the certainty of the unholiness of the sinner, it is both easy and useful to give many signs, as from the effects, &c., by which it may be known what that sin is: and so men may know how far they are guilty of it. But to know certainly whether that sin will prove the damnable state of the sinner, is neither easy, in most cases, nor to be done by many marks.

2. When we are discovering the nature of some duty or grace, and not the very point wherein the soul's sincerity in that grace or duty lieth, it is both easy and useful to give many marks of them. But by these no man can gather assurance of his sincerity.

3. When we are describing a high degree of wickedness, which is far from the best state of an unregenerate man, it is both easy and useful to give plain marks of such a state. But to discover just how much sin will stand with true grace, is another matter.

4. When we are describing the state of the strongest Christians, it is easy and useful to mark them out, and to give many marks of their strength; but to give many of their truth, and to discover the least degree of true grace, is not easy. So I have shown you wherein marks may commendably be multiplied; but to lay down many marks of sincerity, and say, 'By these you may certainly know whether you shall be saved or not;' this I dare not do.

Sect. VI. Prop. 5. There is a threefold truth to be inquired after in examination: 1. The truth of the act or habit; 2. The moral truth of it as a grace or duty; 3. The moral truth of it

as a saving or justifying grace or duty, or as the condition of justification and salvation. It is the last of these three only that the great business in self-examination lieth on, and which we are now searching after; the two first being presupposed as more easily discernible, and less controvertible.[d]

I will not here trouble plain readers, for whose sakes I write, with any scholastic inquiries into the nature of truth, but only look into so much as is of flat necessity to a right managing of the work of self-examination: for it is inconceivable how a man should rationally judge of his own condition, when he knows not what to inquire after; or that he should clearly know his sincerity, who knows not what sincerity is. Yet I doubt not but, by an internal feeling, a strong, sound Christian, who hath his faith and love and other graces in action, may comfortably perceive the sincerity of his graces, though he be so ignorant as not clearly and distinctly to know the nature of sincerity, or to give any just description of it; even as an unlearned man, that is of a sound and healthful body, may feel what health is when he cannot describe it, nor tell distinctly wherein it doth consist. But yet, as he hath a general knowledge of it, so hath this ignorant, sincere Christian, of the nature of sincerity. And, withal, this is a more dangerous ground to stand on, because our sense is so uncertain in this case, more than in the welfare of the body; and the assurance of such a soul will be more defective and imperfect, and very inconstant, who goes by mere feeling, without knowing the nature of what he feeleth, even as the forementioned unlearned man, in case of bodily health, if he have no knowledge, but mere feeling of the nature of health, he will be cast down with a tooth-ache, or some harmless disease, if it be painful, as if he should presently die, when a knowing man could tell that there is no danger; and he would make light of a hectic, or other mortal disease, till it be incurable, because he feels no great pain in it. It is, therefore, a matter of necessity to open, most clearly and distinctly, the nature of sincerity or truth, so far as concerns the case in hand. I told you before, that there is a metaphysical truth of being, and a moral; I now add further, that here are three things to be inquired after: 1. The truth of the act; 2. The truth of the virtuousness of the act; 3. The truth of the justifying or saving nature of the act. The first is of natural, the two last of moral consideration: as,

[d] Lege Aquin. Sum. de Veritate, c. 1, 2, &c. accuratissime de veri et veritatis definitione.

for example, if you be trying the sincerity of your love to God, you must first know that you do love him indeed, without dissembling; 2. That this love is such as is a duty or good, which God requireth; 3. That this love is such as will certainly prove you in a state of salvation. The first of these (whether you believe and love Christ or not) must needs be first known; and this must be known by internal feeling, joined with a consideration of the effects of real love. And to this end many marks may be useful, though, indeed, inward feeling must do almost all; no man else can tell me whether I believe and love, if I cannot tell myself. It is no hard matter to a solid, knowing Christian, to discern this ordinarily; but when they do know this, they are far enough from true assurance, except they go to the rest. A man may be a true man, and not an image, or a shadow, or a corpse, and yet be a false thief, or a liar, and no true man in a moral sense: this I lay down to these uses.*

First, That you take heed when you hear or read marks of grace, how you receive and apply them; and inquire whether it be not only the truth of the being of the act or habit that those marks discover, rather than the virtuous, or the saving being or force.

Secondly, That you take heed, in examination, of taking up at this first step, as if, when you have found that you believe, and love, and repent, you had found all, when yet you have not found that you do it savingly.

Thirdly, To take heed of the doctrine of many in this, who tell you, that every man that hath faith, knows he hath it; and it is impossible to believe, and not to know we believe. This may, ordinarily, but not always, be true about this first truth, of the mere being of the act; but is it no wonder that they should not consider that this is but a presupposed matter, and

* Lege Rivet. Disput. de Certitud. salutis, sect. xxxiii. pp. 248, 249. Even learned Testardus is thus mistaken (De Natura et Grat. p. 142, thes. 180), whose words I will give you, that you may see what way others go, in him. "If any man feel that he believeth, for felt it is, and that most certainly of him that believeth, and be persuaded of the veracity of God and Christ, that man cannot choose but certainly conclude with himself, that his sins are pardoned, and life eternal shall be given him. He, therefore, that professeth himself uncertain of the pardon of his sins, and of his salvation, doth in vain boast that he is a believer. Certainly, he that is not certain of the pardon of his sins and of his salvation, which is the conclusion of the syllogism of faith, is either ignorant of what is contained in the major; or else doth not take it for certain, which yet is the word of God and Christ; or else it must needs be, that he doth not feel that he believes: and how then can he be called a believer?" Thus Testardus erreth, with too many more.

not the great thing that we have to inquire after in point of sincerity? and that they may know they believe long enough, and yet not know their faith to be saving? It is our beyond-sea divines that so mistake in this point: our English divines are sounder in it than any in the world, generally: I think because they are more practical, and have had more wounded, tender consciences under cure, and less empty speculation and dispute. The second truth to be inquired after is, that this act is truly good, or a virtue, or grace; for every act is not a virtue, nor every act that may seem so. I will not stand here curiously to open to you, wherein the goodness of an action doth consist. Somewhat will be said in the following propositions: only thus much at present. To denominate an action properly and fully good, it must be fully agreeable to God's will of precept, both in the matter, end, measure, and all circumstances; but, improperly and imperfectly, it may be called good or virtuous, though there be evil mixed, if the good be most eminent, as if the substance of the action be good, though the circumstances be evil; and thus we ordinarily call actions good: but if the evil be so predominant as that the good lie only in ends or circumstances, and the substance, as it were, of the action be forbidden, then we may not call it a good action, or a grace, or duty. So that it is not perfect, proper goodness that I here speak of, but the second, that is imperfect; when the action is commanded and good in itself, and the good more eminent than the evil; yet it may not be saving for all that.

For there is a common grace which is not saving, yet real, and so true and good, and so true grace; as well as a special grace, which is saving; and there are common duties commanded by God, as alms-deeds, fasting, prayer, &c., which, though they are necessary, yet salvation doth not certainly accompany them, or follow them. A man that finds any moral virtue to be in himself truly, and to be truly a virtue, cannot thence conclude that he shall be saved, nor a man that doth a duty truly good in itself. Many did that which was good in the sight of the Lord, but not with an upright heart; and even an Ahab's humiliation may have some moral goodness, and so some acceptance with God, and bring some benefit to himself, and yet not be saving nor justifying.

And some actions again may be so depraved by the end and manners, that they deserve not the name of good or duty. As to repent of a sinful attempt is, in itself, considered a duty and

good; but if a man repent of it only because it did not succeed, or because he missed of the gain, or pleasure, or honour, which he expected by it, thus he makes it a greater sin; and if he repent but because his pleasure is gone, or because he is brought to poverty or disgrace by his sin, this is but a natural thing, and deserves not the name of a virtue. So to love God is in itself good, and the highest duty; but if a man love God as one that he thinks hath prospered him in his sin, and helped and succeeded him in his revenge, unjust blood-shed, robbery, sinful rising and thriving, thanking God, and loving him for his pleasure in lust, drunkenness, gluttony, or the like, as the most men that idolise their flesh-pleasure do, when they have ease and honour, and all at will, that they may offer a full sacrifice to their flesh, and say, 'Soul, take thine ease,' then they thank God for it, and may really love him under this notion.[f] This is to make God a pander or servant to our flesh, and so to love him for serving and humouring it; and this is so far from being a virtue, that it is one of the greatest of all sins; and if another man love God in a better notion a little, and love his lusts more, this is no saving love, as I shall more fully show you. So that you see a man hath more to look after than the mere honesty, virtue, or moral goodness of his action; or else all actions that are virtuous, would be saving.

The third thing to be inquired after is, the sincerity of grace considered as saving. This is much more than the two former, and, indeed, is the greater matter in self-examination to be looked after: here is the work; here is the difficulty; here it is that we are now inquiring, how far marks may be multiplied; how far they may be useful; and wherein this sincerity doth consist. The two former will not denominate a man a sincere Christian, nor prove him justified, and in a state of salvation, without this. Wherein this consisteth, I shall show you in the following propositions: now, I have first showed you what it is that you must inquire after; and I hope no wise Christian will judge me too curious and exact here, seeing it is a work that nearly concerns us, and is not fit to be done in the dark: our cause must be thoroughly sifted at judgment, and our game then must be played above-board; and therefore it is desperate to juggle and cheat ourselves now; only, before I proceed, let me tell you, that according to this threefold truth or sincerity, so

[f] Πρόσκαιροι sancti dicuntur, et quodammodo sunt, sed sine radice et soliditate, ut Rivet. Disp. de Persev. Sanct. sect. iii. p. 203.

there is a threefold self-delusion or hypocrisy; taking hypocrisy for a seeming to be what we are not, either to ourselves or others, though, perhaps, we have no direct dissembling intent. 1. To take on us to repent, believe, love Christ, &c., when we do not at all: this is the grossest kind of hypocrisy, as wanting the very natural truth of the act.

2. To seem to believe, repent, love God, &c., virtuously, according to the former description, and yet to do it but in subserviency to our lusts and wicked ends, this is another sort of gross hypocrisy; yea, to do it in mere respect to fleshly prosperity, as to repent because sin hath brought us to sickness and poverty, to love God merely because he keeps up our flesh's prosperity, &c.; this is still gross hypocrisy.

It may be a great question, which of these is the greater sin: to repent and love God in subserviency to our sin, or not to do it at all?

Answ. It is not much worth the thinking on, they are both so desperately wicked; therefore I will not trouble the reader with a curious resolution of this question, only thus: Though to deny God's being, be a blasphemous denial of his natural excellency, and so of his attributes, which are the first platform of that which we call morality in the creature; yet to deny these his attributes, and, withal, to ascribe sin and positive wickedness to the blessed, holy God, seems to me the greater sin; *Sicut esse diabolum est pejus (quoad ipsum) quam non esse.*

3. The next kind of hypocrisy, and the most common, is, when men want the sincerity of grace as saving only, but have both the truth of it as an act or habit, and as a virtue. When men have some repentance, faith, hope, love, &c., which is undissembled, and hath good ends, but yet is not saving; this is the unsoundness which most among us in the church perish by, that do perish, and which every Christian should look most to his heart in.[s] This, I think, is discerned by few that are guilty of it, though they might all discern it, if they were willing and diligent.

Sect. VII. Prop. 6. As it is only the precepts of Christ that can assure us that one action is virtuous, or a duty more than another; so it is only the tenor of the covenant of grace, bestowing justification or salvation upon any act, which makes that act, or grace, justifying or saving, and can assure us that it is so.

[s] Ita sincere, tam resipiscentiam quam fidem, conditionem ad salutem adipiscendam prorsus necessariam statuimus.—*Frigiandius de Grat.* p. 997.

By the precepts, I mean any divine determination concerning our duty, what we ought to do or avoid. It is the same sacred instrument which is called God's testament, his covenant, and his new law, the several names being taken from several respects, as I have opened elsewhere, and cannot now stand to prove; this law of God hath two parts, the precept and the sanction. The precept may be considered either as by itself, 'Do this or do that,' and so it maketh duty: this constitutes the virtue of actions, regulating them; and so the second kind of sincerity, 'whether an action be good or bad,' must be tried by the precepts as precepts. What God requireth, is a virtue: what he forbiddeth, is a vice: what he neither requireth nor forbiddeth, is indifferent, as being not of moral consideration: for the popish doctrines of divine counsels is vain.

2. And then these precepts must be considered not only as they stand by themselves, and constitute duty simply, saying 'Do this;' but also as they stand in conjunction with the sanction, and say, 'Do this or that, and be saved, or else perish,' as 'Believe and be saved, else not.' And in this respect and sense, they constitute the conditions of the covenant; and so they are the only rule by which to know what is saving grace, and what not: and only in this respect it is that they justify or condemn men. They may justify or condemn the action, as bare precepts and prohibitions; but they justify not, nor condemn the person himself, but as precepts conjoined with the sanction; that is, with the promise or threatening.

So that it is hence evident, that no human conjecture can gather what is a saving grace or duty, and what not, either from a bare precept, considered disjunct from the promise, or from any thing in the mere nature and use of the gracious act itself. The nature of the act is but its aptitude to its office; but the consequents (for I will not call them effects), justification and salvation, proceed from or upon them only as conditions on which the free promise bestoweth those benefits directly. Those, therefore, which make the formal reason of faith's justifying to lie in its apprehension, which they call its instrumentality, being indeed the very nature and being of the act, do little know what they say, nor how derogatory to Christ, and arrogating to themselves, their doctrine is, as I have elsewhere manifested.

I conclude, then, that it is only the Scripture that can tell you what is justifying or saving grace, by promising and annexing salvation thereto.

Sect. VIII. Prop. 7. Whatsoever therefore is the condition which the covenant of grace requireth of man, for the attaining of justification and salvation, and upon which it doth bestow them, that only is a justifying and saving act. And inferior duties are no further marks to try by, nor are justifying and saving, than as they are reducible to that condition.

This is it which I have asserted in the last foregoing chapter, and this is the reason why I laid down but two marks there. Though, in the first part, in the description of God's people, I laid down the whole description, which must needs contain some things common, and not only special properties, yet now I am to give you the true points of difference, I dare not number so many particulars. The performance of the proper condition of the new covenant, promising justification or salvation, then, is the only mark of justification or salvation, direct and infallible; or is the only justifying and saving grace properly so called. Now, you must understand that the covenant of life hath two parts, as the condition for man to perform, if he will receive the benefits. The first is, the natural part concerning the pure Godhead, who is the first and the last, the principal, efficient, and ultimate end of all; who is our Creator, Preserver, Governor, happiness, or rest. This is 'the taking the Lord only for our God,' in opposition to all idols visible or invisible. As the end, as such, is before and above all the means, and the Father, or mere Godhead, is above Christ the Mediator as such, (as he saith, John xiv. 28, "The Father is greater than I,") so this is the first and greater part of the condition of the covenant: and so idolatry and atheism are the greatest and first condemning sins. The second part of the condition is, 'That we take Jesus Christ only for the Mediator and our Redeemer, and so as our only Saviour and supreme Lord, by the right of redemption.' This is the second part, consisting in the choice of the right and only way and means to God, as he is the end: for Christ, as Mediator, is not the ultimate end, but the way to the Father. These two parts of the condition are most evident in the word, both in their distinction and necessity. The former was part of that covenant made with Adam, which is not repealed, nor ever will be, though the rest of that covenant may be laid by. It was afterwards still fully expressed to the church before Christ's coming in the flesh: in all the people's covenanting, this was still the sum, that they took the Lord only to be their God. But the latter part was not in the covenant with

Adam: nor was it openly and in full plainness put into the covenant of grace in the beginning, but still implied, and more darkly intimated, the light and clearness of revelation still increasing till Christ's coming. Yet so, as that at the utmost they had but the discovery of a Saviour to be born of a virgin, of the tribe of Judah, at such a time, but never that this Jesus was the Christ. And so it was only in a Saviour so to be revealed that they were to believe before: but after Christ's coming, and his miracles, and resurrection, at utmost, he tells them, "If ye believe not that I am he, you shall die in your sins." So that to them to whom he was revealed, at least it was of necessity to believe that this Jesus is he, and not to look for another. Now, to us Christians under the New Testament, this latter part of the covenant (concerning the Mediator) is most fully expressed, and most frequently inculcated: not as if the former part (concerning God the Creator and end) were become less necessary than before, or ever the less to be studied by Christians, or preached by the ministers of the Gospel, but on the contrary, it is still implied, as being fully revealed before, and a thing generally received by the church; yea, and confirmed and established by the adding of the Gospel, and preaching of Christ; for the end is still supposed and implied, when we determine of the means; and the means confirm and not deny the excellency and necessity of the end. Therefore, when Paul (Acts xvii. &c.) was to preach to the Athenians or other heathens, he first preacheth to them the Godhead, and seeks to bring them from their idols, and then preacheth Christ. And therefore it is said, "He that comes to God (as the end and his happiness, or Creator and Preserver) must first believe that God is, and that he is (in the Redeemer) a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Heb. xi.) And, therefore, the apostles preached "repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ." (Acts xx. 21.) The first is, "the turning from idols to the true God," and so repentance is in order of nature before faith in the Mediator, and more excellent in its nature, as the end is than the way; but not before faith in the Godhead. The second is the only highway to God. Therefore, Paul was by preaching, to turn men from darkness to light; both from the darkness of atheism and idolatry, and the darkness of infidelity, but first from the power of Satan, and worshipping devils, to God; that so next, by faith in Christ, they might receive remission of sin, and inheritance among them that are

sanctified. (Acts xxvi. 28.) And Christ himself took the same course, and preached these two parts of the condition of the covenant distinctly. "This is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and (then) Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." (John xvii. 3.) Words of knowledge in Scripture commands, import affection. And "The Father is greater than I." (John xiv. 28.) And "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh to the Father but by me." (John xiv. 6.) And "Ye believe in God (there is he first part), Believe also in me;" (John xiv. 1;) (there is the second part.) But intended brevity forbids me to heap up more proof in so plain a case.

To this last part of the condition is opposed infidelity, or not believing in Christ, being the chiefest condemning sin, next to atheism and idolatry, which are opposite to the first part. On these two parts of the condition of the covenant, hath God laid all our salvation, as much as concerns our part; still supposing that God and the Mediator have done and will do all their part.

The first part of the condition I call, the natural part, being from the beginning, and written in the nature of every reasonable creature, and by an eminency and excellency it is of natural morality above all other laws whatsoever. The second I call the supernatural part of the condition: as being not known to any man by the mere light of nature, but is supernaturally revealed to the world by the Gospel. The first part also is the basis or great command of the decalogue, "Thou shalt have none other God but me;" or in other terms, "Thou shalt love God above all." The second is the great command of the Gospel, "Believe in the Lord Jesus;" or in other terms, "Love Christ above all." For, as I said, words of knowledge in Scripture imply affection, especially will, where all acts of the soul are complete, which in the intellect are but incomplete, imperfect, and preparatory, the understanding being but the entrance to the will, and the will being an extended understanding. Therefore, sometimes Christ saith, "He that believeth not, is condemned." Sometimes, "He that loveth any thing more than me, is not worthy of me, and cannot be my disciple." And he joineth them together in John xvi. 27. Therefore hath the Father loved you, because you have loved me, and have believed, &c. Intellectual belief, or assent, therefore, wherever you read it commanded, implieth the will's consent and love.

And thus I have showed you what the conditions of the co-

venant are, which I have done the more fully, that you might know what is a saving grace or act, and what not. For you may easily conceive that it must needs be safer trying by these than by any lower act or duty: and as all other are no further saving, than as they belong to these, or are reducible to them, so you can no further try yourselves by them, but as they are reduced to these. And now you see the reason why I mentioned but only two marks in the foregoing chapter, and why I say that true marks are so few by which a man may safely try his title to heaven. And yet you shall see that we must yet reduce them to a narrower room, when we come to open the nature of sincerity. In preparation to which I must tell you, that in the terms of these two marks, or two parts of the condition of the covenant, there is contained somewhat common, which an unregenerate man may perform, and somewhat special and proper to the saints. Though all must go together and be found in those that will be saved, yet the specifical form, or constitutive difference, by which, as saving, the act of a true believer is discerned from the act of an unsound person, doth lie but in a part of it, and I think but in one point: as a man is defined to be a reasonable living creature; but to be a creature will not prove him a man, nor to be a living creature neither, because that there are other creatures, and living creatures, or animate, besides himself. But to be a reasonable animal, or living creature, will prove him a man, because reason contains his specific form and constitutive difference. Other inferior creatures may have bodies, and fleshly bodies, as well as man, and others may have life, which we call a soul, and yet man must have these two; but others with these have not reason, or a soul endued with a power of reasoning. So in these marks of grace, or conditions of the covenant. To love, is common to every man. To love God and Christ, is common to a Christian, with an hypocrite or wicked man; but to love Christ savingly, that is, as I shall show you presently, sovereignly, or chiefly, this is the form or constitutive difference of love which is saving. To take or accept, is common to every man; to take or accept of God and Christ, is common to a true Christian and a false; but to take or accept of God and his Christ sincerely and savingly, is proper to a sound believer; so that even in these two marks, the sincerity of both lieth in one point. For, supposing the truth of the act, and the truth of the virtue in general, (which are both common, as I have told you,) the truth or sin-

cerity of them as saving, is the only thing to be inquired after. And in this sense, I know but one infallible mark of sincerity: seeing sincerity lieth in this one point. But before I come to open it more fully, I will premise, and but briefly name, two more propositions.

Sect. IX. Prop. 8. God hath not in the covenant promised justification or salvation upon any mere act or acts considered without that degree and suitableness to their objects, wherein the sincerity of them, as saving, doth consist.

It is said, indeed, "that he that believeth shall be saved," but then it is supposed that it be sincere believing; for any believing is not here meant. For many that believed, and that without gross dissimulation, shall perish, as not believing sincerely. And, therefore, Christ would not trust himself with those that yet believed in him, because he knew their hearts, that they did it not in faithfulness and sincerity. (John ii. 23, 24.) But I shall confirm this more fully afterwards.

Sect. X. Prop. 9. There is no one act, considered in its mere nature and kind, without its measure and suitableness to its object, which a true Christian may perform, but an unsound Christian may perform it also.

I have great reason to add this, that you may take heed of trying and judging of yourselves by any mere act, considered in itself. If any doubt of this, we might soon prove it by producing the most excellent acts, and showing it of them in particular. Believing is as proper to the saved as any thing for the act. And yet, as for the assenting act, James tells us the devils believe. And as for resting on Christ by affiance, and expecting pardon and salvation from him, we see beyond question, that many thousand wicked men have no other way to quiet them in sinning, but that they are confident Christ will pardon and save them, and they undissemblingly quiet or rest their souls in this persuasion, and undissemblingly expect salvation from him when they have sinned as long as they can. And, indeed, herein lieth the nature of presumption: and so real are they in this faith, that all our preaching cannot beat them from it. If the question be, whether a wicked man can pray, or meditate, or forbear the act of this or that sin, I think none will deny it. But yet all this will be opened more fully anon.

Sect. XI. Prop. 10. The supremacy of God and the Mediator in the soul, or the precedency and prevalency of his interest in us, above the interest of the flesh, or of inferior good,

is the very point wherein materially[h] the sincerity of our graces, as saving, doth consist; and so is the one mark by which those must judge of their state that would not be deceived.

Propos. 11. For the saving object being resolved of in the Gospel, here the sincerity of the act, as saving, consisteth formally[i] in being suited to its adequate object, considered in those respects which are essential to it as such an object. And so to believe in, accept, and love God as God, and Christ as Christ, is the sincerity of these acts. But this lieth in believing, accepting, and loving God, as the only supreme Authority, or Ruler, and God and Christ as the only Redeemer, and so our Lord, our sovereign Saviour, our Husband and our Head.

I join both these propositions together, because the explication of both will be best joined together. And first, I will tell you what I mean by some of these terms in these propositions.

1. When I speak of the interest of God and the Mediator in the soul, I do not mean a mere right to us, which we call *jus ad rem*, for so God and the Mediator, God-man, have interest in all men: as being undoubtedly rightful Lord of all, whether they obey him or not; but I mean Christ's actual interest in us, and possession of us, which we call *jus in re*, and that, as it consisteth in a voluntary entertainment of him into all the powers of the soul, according to the several capacities and offices. As we use to say of men in respect of their friends, 'Such a man hath so much interest in his friend, that he can prevail with him before any other.' So, when God's interest in us is greater than the interest of the flesh, that he hath the precedency and supremacy in our understandings, wills, and affections, this is the sincerity of all our graces as saving; and so the discovery of our soul's sincerity. I shall yet more fully open this anon.

2. I here include the interest of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, both as they are conjunct, and as they are distinct. As considered in the essence and unity of the Godhead, so their interest is conjunct; both Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, being our Creator,

[h] Mark, I say but materially.

[i] Formally, what this sincerity is. When I say as such, I mean only with a bare notion or opinion that God is the chief Good; for that will not make him our chief End: but 1. With a sound, effectual belief that he is such: 2. With a predominant will or love, which shall give him a most prevalent interest in our hearts. These two propositions must be remembered for the understanding of the next.

Ruler, and ultimate End, and chief Good. But in the distinction of persons, as it was the Son in a proper sense that redeemed us, and thereby purchased a peculiar interest in us, and dominion over us, as he is Redeemer, so doth he carry on this interest in a peculiar way. And so the interest of the Holy Ghost as our Sanctifier, is specially advanced by our yielding to his motions, &c.

3. By the supremacy of God, and the prevalency of Christ's interest, I do not mean,[k] that it always prevaileth for actual obedience against the suggestions and allurements of the flesh. A man may possibly pleasure a lesser friend, or a stranger, before a greater friend, for once or more, and then it proves not that the stranger hath the greatest interest in him. But I mean, that God hath really more of his esteem, and will, and rational, though not passionate, love, and desire, and authority, and rule, in his heart and life.

4. When I speak of the interest of the flesh, I chiefly intend and include that inferior good which is the flesh's delight. For here are, considerably distinct, 1. The part which would be pleased in opposition to Christ; and that, with the Scripture, I call the flesh. 2. The thing which this flesh desires as its happiness; and that is, its own pleasure, delight, and full content. 3. The objects from whence it expecteth this delight and content; and that is, all inferior good which it apprehendeth to conduce most to that end, as being most suitable to itself. By the flesh, then, I mean, the soul as sensitive, as it is now since the fall become unruly, by the strengthening of its raging desires, and the weakening of reason that should rule it, and consequently the rational part thereby seduced; or if the rational (misinformed and ill-disposed) be the leader in any sin, before or without the sensitive; so that I mean, that which inordinately inclineth us to any inferior good. This inferior good consisteth in the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and pride of life, as John distinguisheth them; or as commonly they are distributed, in pleasure, profits, and honour; all which are concentred and terminated in the sin we call flesh-pleasing in the general; for that pleasure it is which is sought in all; or it is the pursuit of an inferior, fleshly happiness, preferred before the superior.

[k] Renati quantumvis alacriter militent adversus peccata, tamen et multa e magna carnis imbecillitate laborant; cui, spiritu divinitus excitato, obluctantur: crebro tamen à cupiditatibus carnis se vinci patiuntur, &c.—*Suffrag Theolog. Bremensium in Synodo Dord.* in art. v. thes. 9. Vid. thes. 10—13.

spiritual, everlasting happiness. Though most commonly this pleasure be sought in honour, riches, eating, drinking, pleasant dwellings, company, sports and recreations, clothes, wantonness, or lustful uncleanness, the satisfying of passions and malicious desires, or the like; yet sometime it riseth higher, and the sinner seeketh his happiness and content in largeness of knowledge, much learning and curious speculations about the nature of the creatures, yea, and about God himself. But perhaps it will be found that these are nearly of the same nature with the former sensitive delights. For it is not the excellency or goodness of God himself that delighteth them, but the novelty of the thing, and the agitation of their own imagination, fancy, and intellect, thereupon, which is naturally desirous to be actuated, and employed, as receiving thereby some seeming addition to its own perfection; and that not as from God, who is the object of their knowledge, but as from the mere enlargement of knowledge in itself; or, which is far worse, they make the study of God and divine things which they delight in, but subservient to some base, inferior object; and so though they delight in studying and knowing God, and heaven, and Scripture, yet not in God as God, or the chief Good, nor in heaven as heaven, nor out of any true saving love to God; but either, because, as some preachers, they make a gainful trade of it, by teaching others; or because it is an honour to know these things, and be able to discourse of them, and a dishonour to be ignorant; or at best, as I said before, they desire to know God and divine truths, out of a delight in the novelty, and actuating, and natural elevation of the understanding hereby; it is one thing to delight in knowing, and another to delight in the thing known. An ungodly man may delight in studying and knowing several axioms or truths concerning God, but he never chiefly delighteth in God himself. As a studious man desires to know what hell is, and where, and many truths concerning it; but he desireth not hell itself, nor delighteth in it. A godly man desireth to know the nature and danger of sin, and Satan's way and wiles in temptations; but he doth not therefore desire sin and temptation itself. So a wicked man may desire to know the nature of grace, and Christ, and glory, and yet not desire grace, and Christ, and glory. It is one thing to terminate a man's desire and delight in bare knowledge, or the esteem, or self-advancement, that accrues thereby; and another thing to terminate it in the thing which we desire to know; making knowledge but a

means to its fruition. So that, though the virtuousness or viciousness of our willing, and several affections, do receive its denomination and specification very much from the object, as in loving God, and loving sinful pleasure, &c., because there is a proper and ultimate *terminus* of the soul's motion, yet the acts of the understanding may be exercised about the best of objects, without any virtuousness at all; it being but the truth and not the goodness that is its object; and that truth may be in the best object and in the worst. And so it is the same kind of delight that such a man hath in knowing God, and knowing other things; for it is the same kind of truth that he seeks in both. And, indeed, truth is not the ultimate object terminating the soul's motion, not as it is truth, but an intermediate prerequisite to good, which is the ultimately terminating object; and accordingly the acts of the mere understanding are but preparatory to the act of the will, and so are but imperfect initial acts of the soul, as having a further end than their own proper object; and therefore it is that all philosophers place no moral habits in the understanding, but all in the will; for till they come to the will, though they may be in a large sense morally good or evil, virtuous or vicious, yet they are but so in an imperfect kind and sense, and therefore they call such habits only intellectual.

The sum of all this is, that it is but the flesh's pleasure and interest which an ungodly man chiefly pursueth, even in his delightful studying of holy things; for he studieth holy things and profane alike. Or if any think it too narrow a phrase, to call this flesh-pleasing, or preferring the interest of the flesh, it being the soul as rational, and not only as sensitive, which turneth from God to inferior things; I do not gainsay this: I know that man apostatized from God to himself; and that in regeneration he is turned again from himself to God. Yet this must be very cautelously understood; for God forbiddeth not man to seek himself duly, but commandeth it: man may and must seek his own happiness. The chief good is desired as good to us. But to state this case rightly, and determine the many great difficulties that here rise in the way, is no fit work for this place: I will not therefore so much as name them. The easiest and safest way therefore to clear the present difficulty to us is, to look chiefly at the different objects and ends: God, who is the supreme Good, presenteth and offereth himself to us to be enjoyed. Inferior good stands up in competition with him, and would insinuate itself into

our hearts, as if it were more amiable and desirable than God. Now, if God's interest prevail, it is a certain sign of grace; if inferior good prevail, and have more actual interest or possession than God, it is a certain sign of an unhappy condition; or that the person is not yet in a state of salvation.

And as you thus see what I mean by the interest of the flesh, or inferior good in us; so in all this I include the interest of the world and the devil: for the world is, at least, the greatest part of this inferior good, which stands in competition with God. And Satan is but the envious agent to present this bait before us; to put a false gloss on it in his presentation; to weaken all God's arguments that should restrain us; to disgrace God himself to our souls; and so to press and urge us to a sinful choice and prosecution. He shows us the forbidden fruit as pleasant, and as a means to our greater advancement and happiness, and draweth us to unbelief for the hiding of the danger. He takes us up in our imagination, and shows us the kingdoms of the world and their glory, to steal our hearts from the glorious kingdom of God. So that the interest of the flesh, the interest of the world, and the interest of Satan, in us, is all one in effect. For they are but several causes to carry the soul from God, to a false, deluding, miserable end.

Again, in the proposition, I say, 'It is the prevalency of the interest of God or Christ, above inferior good,' putting inferior good as the competitor with God, who is the greatest Good; because the will cannot incline to any thing under the notion of evil, or of indifferent, but only as good. No man can will evil as evil; he must first cease to be rational, and to be man. If evil appeared only as evil, there were no danger in it. The force of the temptation lies in making evil seem good, either to the senses, or imagination, or reason, or all. Here lies the danger of a pleasing condition in regard of credit, delights, riches, friends, habitation, health, or any inferior thing; the more good appeareth or seemeth to be in them, as disjunct from God, the more dangerous; for they are the liker to stand up in competition with him, and to carry it with our partial, blinded souls in the competition. Remember this, if you love yourselves, when you would have all things about you more pleasing and lovely. Here lies the unknown danger of a prosperous state; and on the contrary lies the precious benefit of adversity, which, if men were not brutish and unbelieving, they would heartily welcome as the safest condition.

Again, observe here, that I mention inferior 'good,' and n 'truth,' as that which stands in competition with God. For two truths, both are equally true, though not equally eviden and, therefore, though Satan would persuade the soul that i ferior good is better for us than God, yet he sets not tru against truth in competition. He would indeed make us belie that God's word is not true at all, or the truth not certain. B with the understanding there is no competition between tru and truth, if known so to be. For the understanding can knc and believe several truths at once, though about ever so diffe ent matters, as that there is a heaven and a hell, that there a God, a Christ, a world, a devil, &c. But the will cannot en brace and choose all different good at once; for God hath ma the enjoyment of them incompatible; much less can it will tv things as the chiefest good, when there is but one such; or G and the creature equally good, and both in the highest degree

Here, then, you further see the meaning of the propositior when I speak of the prevalency of Christ's interest, I mean directly and principally in the will of man, and not in the unde standing. For though I doubt not but there is true grace in tl understanding as well as in the will, yet, as I shall further sho anon, as it is in the intellect, it is not certainly and fully discer ible, but only as the force of the intellective acts appear in tl motions and resolutions of the will. And, therefore, men mu not try their state directly by any graces or marks in the unde standing. And also if it were possible to discern their sinceri immediately in the understanding, yet it must not be there l this way of competition of different objects in regard of the d gree of verity, as if one were more true, and the other less; it is with the will about the degrees of goodness in the objec which stand in competition. Though yet a kind of competitic there is with the intellect too;[1] as, 1. Between God and tl creature, who is to be believed rather; and, 2. Between tw contradictory or opposite propositions, which is true, and whic false. As between these, God is the chief Good, and, God is n the chief Good; or these, God is the chief Good, and, pleasu is the chief good. But though the truth be here believed, y that is no certain evidence of sincerity; except it be so believe as may be prevalent with the will; which is not discernible i the bare act of believing, but in the act of willing. So that it

[1] The sincerity of grace in the intellect, is most observable in its estima tion of God above the creature, viz., as better in himself and to us.

the prevalency of Christ's interest in the will that we here speak of; and consequently in the affections, and conversation. And indeed, as is before hinted, all human acts, as they are in the mere understanding, are but crude and imperfect; for it is but the first digestion, as it were, that is there performed, as of meat in the stomach, but in the will they are more perfectly concocted, as the chyle is sanguified in the liver, spleen, and veins; and in the affections they are yet further raised and concocted, as the vital spirits are begotten in the heart; though many here take mere flatulency for spirits; and so they do common passion for spiritual affections; and then in the conversation, as the food in the habit of the body, the concoction is finished; so that the sincerity of grace cannot, I think, be discerned by any mere intellectual act: as you may find judicious Dr. Stoughton asserting in his 'Righteous Man's Plea to Happiness.' But yet do not misunderstand it, as if saving grace did not reside in the understanding.

Now, as the apostle saith, "The flesh warreth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary one to the other:" (Gal. v. 17:) a Christian's life is a continual combat between these two contrary interests. God will be taken for our portion and happiness, and so be our ultimate End, or else we shall never enjoy him to make us happy: the flesh suggesteth to us the sweetness and delight of carnal contentments, and would have us glut ourselves with these. God will rule, and that in supremacy, or he will never save us. The flesh would fain be pleased, and have its desire, whether God be obeyed and pleased or not. There is no hope of reconciling these contrary interests. God hath already made his laws, containing the conditions of our salvation or damnation; these laws do limit the desires of the flesh, and contradict its delights: the flesh cannot love that which is against it. It hates them, because they speak not good of it, but evil, because it so mightily crosseth its contents. It was meet it should be so; for if God had suffered no competitors to set up their interest against his, how would the faithfulness of his subjects be tried; how would his providences and graces be manifested? Even to Adam, that yet had no sin, this way of trial was judged necessary: and when he would please his eye and his taste, and desire to be higher, it was just with God to displease him, and to bring him lower. God will not change these, his holy and righteous laws, to please the flesh, nor conform himself to its will. The flesh will not conform itself to God; and so here is

the christian combat. Christ, who has purchased us, expecte
the first or chief room in our affections, or else he will
fectively be no Saviour for us. The flesh doth importunat
solicit the affections to give the chief room and entertainme
to its contents. Christ, who hath so dearly bought the don
nion over us all, will either rule us as our sovereign, or conden
us for our rebellion. (Luke xix. 27.) The flesh would be fr
and is still soliciting us to treason. For as easy as Chris
yoke is, and light as is his burden, yet it is no more suited wi
the flesh's interest, than the heavier and more grievous law wa
the law of liberty, is not a law of carnal liberty. Now, in th
combat, the word and ministry are solicitors for Christ; so
reason itself, so far as it is rectified and well guided: but b
cause reason is naturally weakened and blind; yea, and t
word alone is not sufficient to illuminate and rectify it; ther
fore Christ sends his Spirit into the souls of his people,
make that word effectual to open their eyes: here is the gre
help that the soul hath for the maintaining or carrying on th
interest of Christ. But yet once illuminating is not enoug
For the will doth not necessarily choose that which the unde
standing concludeth to be best, (even *hic et nunc, et considerat
considerandis.*) A drunkard's understanding may tell him, tha
it is far better, all things laid together, to forbear a cup of win
than to drink it: and that the good of virtue and duty is to b
preferred before the good of pleasure, this experience assures u
of, though all the philosophers in the world should contradict i
and I am not disputing now, and therefore I will not stand t
meddle with men's contrary opinions; and yet the violence o
his sensual appetite may cause him to lay hands on the cup an
pour it in. And, indeed, so far it is a brutish act; and it is n
such wonder to have sinful acts termed and proved brutish, i
we knew that all true reason is against them. Reason is o
God's side, and that which is against him is not reason. W
may by discourse proceed to sin; but the arguments are all falla-
cious that draw us. There is no necessity for the committing o
a sin, that reason or the understanding should first conclude i
best; so great is the power of sense upon the fancy and imagina-
tion, and of these on the passions, and the choosing power, espe-
cially as to the exciting of the locomotive, that if reason be bu
silent and suspended, sin will be committed, as a man hath lustful
and revengeful, and covetous desires in his dream, and that ver
violent. Reason is often asleep when the senses are awake;

and then they may easily play their game: even as the godliest man cannot restrain a sinful thought or desire in his dream, as he can waking; so, neither when he is waking, if reason be asleep: although reason never take part with sin, yet if it stand neuter, the sin will be committed. Yea, that is not all; but if reason do conclude for duty and against sin, and stand to that conclusion; yet, I think, the sensitive sinful appetite and imagination may prevail with the will, unless you may say that this appetite is the will itself, man having but one will, and so may itself command the locomotive, against, as well as without the conclusion of reason, as in the example before mentioned.

To understand this, you must know, that to the motion of the will effectually, especially where there are violent contrary motions and inducements, it is not only necessary that the understanding say, This is a duty, or This is a sin; or, It is better to let it alone: but this must be concluded of as a matter of great importance and concernment; and the understanding must express the weight as well as the truth of what it utters concerning good or evil; and this must especially be by a strong and forcible act; or else, though it conclude rightly, yet it will not prevail. Many men may have their understandings informed of the same duty, and all at the very exercise conclude it good and necessary; and so concerning the evil of sin. And yet, though they all pass the same conclusion, they shall not all alike prevail with the will; but one more, and another less: because one passeth this conclusion seriously, vigorously, importunately; and the other, slightly, and sleepily, and remissly. If you be busy, writing or reading, and one friend comes to you to call you away to some great business, and useth very weighty arguments, yet if he speak them coldly and sleepily, you may perhaps not be moved by him; but if another come and call you but upon a lesser business, and speak loud and earnestly, and will take no denial, though his reasons be weaker, he may sooner prevail. Do we not feel that the words of a preacher do take more with our wills and affections, from the moving, pathetical manner of expression, than from the strength of argument, except with very wise men? at least, how much that furthers it! when the best arguments in the mouth of a sleepy preacher, or unseasonably and ill-favouredly delivered, will not take. And why should we think that there is so great difference between other men's reasonings prevailing with our wills, and our own reason's way of prevailing?

Now, all this being so, that there must be a strong, livel loud, pressing, importunate reasoning, and not only a true re soning and concluding; hence it is that there is necessary the soul, not only so much illumination as may discover tl truth, but so much as may discover it clearly and fully, and ma show us the weight of the matter, as well as the truth, an especially as may be still an exciter of the understanding to d its duty, and may quicken it up to do it vigorously; and there fore to this end Christ giveth his Spirit to his people, to striv against the flesh. The soul is seated in all the body, but w certainly and sensibly perceive that it doth not exercise or ac alike in all; but it understandeth in and by the brain, or ani mal spirits; and it willeth, and desireth, and loveth, an feareth, and rejoiceth, in and by the heart; and doubtless th vital spirits, or those in the heart, are the soul's instrument i this work. Now, to procure a motion of the spirits in th heart, by the foremotion of the spirits in the brain, requires som strength in the first motion; and the more forcible it is, likel the more forcible will the motion in the heart be. This orde and instrumentality in acting, is no disparagement to the soul but is a sweet discovery of God's admirable and orderly works Now, therefore, besides a bare act of understanding, there is necessary to this effectual prevailing with the will, that there be added that which we call consideration, which is a dwelling upon the subject, and is a serious, fixed, constant acting of the understanding, which therefore is likely to attain the effect: the use of this, and its power on the will and affections, and the reasons, I have showed you in the Fourth Part of this book. Hence it is, that let their wits be ever so great, yet inconsiderate men are ever wicked men; and men of sober, frequent consideration, are usually the most godly, and prevail most against any temptation; there being no more effectual means against any temptation, indeed, whether it be to omission or commission, than this setting reason forcibly a-work by consideration. The most considerate men are the most resolved and confirmed. So that besides a bare, cold conclusion of the understanding, though you call it practical, this consideration must give that force, and fixedness, and importunity, to your conclusions, which may make them stronger than all the sensitive solicitations to the contrary, or else the soul will still follow the flesh. Now Christ will have his Spirit to excite this consideration; and to enable us to perform it more powerfully, and

successfully, than else we should ever do. And thus the Spirit is Christ's solicitor in and to our souls; and by them it advanceth Christ's interest, and maintaineth it in the saints, and causeth it to prevail against the interest of the flesh. Where he prevaileth not in the main, as well as striveth, there is yet no saving grace in that soul. Whatever pleadings, or strivings, or reasonings, or concludings, there may be in and by the soul on Christ's side, yet if the flesh's interest be still greater and stronger in the soul than Christ's, that soul is in a state of wrath: he may be in a hopeful way to come to a safer condition, and not far from the kingdom of God, and almost persuaded to be a Christian; but if he die in that state, no doubt he shall be damned. He may be a Christian by common profession; but, in a saving sense, no man is a Christian, in whose soul any thing hath a greater and higher interest than God the Father, and the Mediator.

Sect. XII. Prop. 12. Therefore the sincerity of saving grace lieth materially, not in the bare nature of it, but in the degree; not in the degree, considered absolutely in itself, but comparatively, as it is prevalent against its contrary.[m]

I cannot expect that the reader should suddenly receive this truth, though of so great consequence, that many men's salvation are concerned in it, as I shall show anon, till I have first made it plain. Long have I been poring on this doubt, whether the sincerity of grace, and so the difference between an hypocrite and a true Christian, do materially consist in the nature, or only in the degree; whether it be physically considered a gradual or specifical difference; and I never durst conclude that it lay but in the physical degree. 1. Because of the seeming force of the objections, which I shall answer anon; and, 2. Because of the contrary judgment of those divines whom I highliest valued. For though I am ashamed of my own ignorance, yet I do not repent that I received some things upon trust from the learned, while I was learning and studying them, or that I took them by a human faith, when I could not reach to take them by a divine faith. Only, I then must hold them but as opinions; but not absolutely as articles of my creed. But I am now convinced of

[m] This proposition being so much misunderstood by many, as since the writing of it I perceive, I desire the reader to look to the addition at the end of the book for a further explication of it, and also to the two last propositions.

my former mistake; and shall therefore endeavour to recti others, being in a matter of such moment.

You must remember, therefore, that I have showed yo already, that God hath not made an act, considered in its mer nature, without considering it as in this prevailing degree, to b the condition of salvation; and that a wicked man may perfor an act for the nature of it, which a true Christian may. But le us yet consider the proposition more distinctly.

Divines use to give the title of saving grace to four things.

The first is, God's purpose of saving us, and the special lov and favour which he beareth to us, and so his will to do specia good. This is, indeed, most principally, properly, and by ar excellency, called saving grace. It is the fountain from which all other grace doth proceed; and by this grace we are elected, redeemed, justified, and saved. Now, the question in hand, is not concerning this grace which is immanent in God, where no doubt there is no specifical difference, when divines accord that there is no diversity or multiplicity at all, but perfect unity, allowing still the unsearchable mystery of the Trinity; therefore, I rest confident that no solid divine will say, that God's common love or grace to the unsanctified, doth by a natural specification differ from his special love and grace to his chosen, as they are in God.

The second thing which is commonly called saving grace, is, the act of God, by which the Spirit infuseth or worketh the special, habitual saving gifts in the soul; not the effect, for that I shall next mention, but the act of the Holy Ghost, which worketh this effect. This is called *gratia operans*, working grace; as the effect in us is called *gratia operata*, grace wrought in us. Now,

1. This is none of it we inquire after in the question in hand, when we ask, 'Whether the truth of grace lie only in the comparative or prevailing degree?'

2. If it were, yet there is here no place for such a doubt. 1. Because no man can prove such a natural, specific difference in the acts of God, nor will, I think, affirm them. 2. Especially, because in the judgment of great divines, there is no such act of God at all distinct from his essence and immanent, eternal acts; so that this is the same with the former. God doth not need, as man, to put forth any act, but his mere willing it for the producing of any effect. If man will have a stone

moved, his will cannot stir it; but it must be the strength of his arm: but God doth but will it, and it is done; as Dr. Twisse once or twice saith, but Bradwardine and the Thomists peremptorily maintain. Now, God's will is his essence, and he never did begin or cease to will any thing, though he will the beginning or ceasing of things. He willed the creation of the world and the dissolution of it at once from eternity; though he willed from eternity, that it should be created and dissolved in time; and so the effect only doth begin and end, but not the cause. This is our ordinary, metaphysical divinity. If any vulgar reader think it beyond his capacity, I am content that he move in a lower orb. But we must not feign a natural, specific difference of acts in God.

The third thing which we commonly call saving grace is, the special effects of this work of the Spirit on the soul, commonly called habitual grace, or the Spirit in us, or the seed of God abiding in us, or our real holiness, or our new nature.

Now, 1. Our question is not directly and immediately of this, 'Whether common and special grace do differ more than by the fore-mentioned degree:' for this is not it which a Christian searcheth after immediately, or directly, in his self-examination. For habits, as Suarez and others conclude, are not to be felt of themselves, but only by their acts. We cannot know that we are disposed to love God, but by feeling the stirrings of love to him. So that it is the act that we must directly look for, and thence discern the habit.

2. But if any man will needs put the question of this habitual grace only, though it be not that I speak of principally, yet I answer him, that no man doubteth but that common grace containeth good dispositions, as special grace containeth habits. Now, who knoweth not that a disposition and a habit do differ but in degree? A carnal man, by the help of common grace, hath a weak inclination to good, and a strong inclination to evil; or, if you will speak properly (for the will cannot choose evil as evil, but as a seeming good), he hath a weak inclination to spiritual and heavenly, superior good, and a strong inclination to fleshly, earthly, inferior good; whereupon the stronger bears down the weaker. But the regenerate have stronger inclinations to superior, spiritual good, than to inferior, fleshly good; and so the stronger in most temptations prevaileth. Now, what natural difference is here, but only in degree?

The fourth thing which we call saving grace, is, the exercise

or acts which, from these habits or effectual inclinations, proceed; and this is the grace which the soul must inquire aft directly in its self-examination; and therefore this is it of whi we raise the question, wherein the truth or sincerity of it do consist? There are, indeed, other things without us which ma yet be called saving grace, as redemption and donation (com monly called the imputation) of Christ's righteousness, and remission, justification, &c.; but because every one may see th our question is not of these, I will not stand to make more men tion of them. Now, for these acts of grace, who can produc any natural, specific difference between them, when they ar special and saving, and when they are common and not saving Is not common knowledge and special knowledge, common be lief and special belief, all knowledge and belief; and is not be lief the same thing in one and in another, supposing both to b real, though but one saving? Our understandings and wills ar all, physically, of the like substance; and an act and an act, ar accidents of the same kind; and we suppose the object to b the same: common love to God, and special saving love to God, be both acts of the will upon an object physically the same.

But here, before I proceed further, I must tell you, that you must still distinguish between a physical or natural specification, and a moral; and remember, that our question is only of a physical difference, which I deny; and not of a moral, which I make no doubt of. And you must know, that a mere difference in degrees, in the natural respect, doth ordinarily constitute a specifical difference in morality; and the moral good or evil of all our actions lieth much in the degree, to wit, that they be kept in the mean between the two extreme degrees: and so a little anger, and a great deal, and little love to creatures, and a great deal, though they differ but gradually in their natures, yet they differ specifically in morality; so that one may be an excellent virtue, and the other an odious vice: so, between speaking too much and too little; eating or drinking too much or too little; the middle between these is a virtue, and both extremes are vices; and yet, naturally, they differ but in degree. Virtue, as virtue, consisteth not in the bare nature of an act; but formally it consisteth in the agreement or conformity of our actions or dispositions to the rule or law, which determineth of their dueness; which law, or rule, prescribeth the mean or middle degree, and forbiddeth and condemneth both the extremes, in degree, where such extremes are possible, and we capable of

them. So that there is a very great moral difference, such as may be termed specific, between those acts which naturally do differ only in degree. I say a moral, specifical difference is usually founded in a natural, gradual difference: if you confound these two specifications, you will lose yourselves in this point, and injuriously understand me.

Furthermore, observe that I say, that sincerity of grace, as saving, lieth in the degree, not formally, but, as it were, materially only; for I told you before, the form of it consisteth in their being the condition on which salvation is promised. The form which we inquire after, is a relation. As the relation of our actions to the precept is the form of their virtuousness, viz., when they are such as are commanded; so the relation of them to the promise, is the form of them, as saving, and so as justifying: but because this promise giveth not salvation to the act considered in its mere being, and natural sincerity, but to the act as suited to its object, in its essential respects; and that suitableness of the act, to the form of its object, consisteth only in a certain degree of the act, seeing the lowest degree cannot be so suited; therefore, I say that sincerity lieth, as it were, materially, only in the degree of those acts, and not in the bare and natural being of it.

Lastly, consider, especially, that I say not that sincerity lieth in the degree of any act in itself considered, as if God had promised salvation to us, if we love him so much, or up to such a height, considered absolutely; but it is, in the degree, considered comparatively, as to God compared with other things, and as other objects or commanders stand in competition with him; and so it is in the prevalency of the act or habit against all contraries.

Sect. XIII. Having thus explained my meaning herein, the clearing of all this to you, and fuller confirmation, will be best dispatched these three ways: 1. By exemplifying in each particular grace, and trying this rule upon them severally; 2. By examining some of the most ordinary marks, which have been hitherto delivered, and Christians use to take comfort in; 3. By inquiring what Scripture saith in the point. And, after these, I shall answer the objections that are against it, and then show you the usefulness and necessity of it, and danger of the contrary.

1. The graces of the spirit in man's soul, are either in the understanding, or in the will and affections. Those in the under-

standing, as knowledge, prudence, assent to God's word, calle faith, &c., I make no question, are as truly grace, and as prop to the saints, as those in the will and affections. Divers e here on both extremes: some say that there is no special gra in the understanding, but in the will only; others say that a special grace is in the understanding, and that the will is capabl of nothing but freedom to choose or refuse, and that it ever fo lows the last dictate of the practical understanding, and there fore no more is needful but to inform the understanding; othe say, both understanding and will are the subject of specia sanctifying grace, and that in both it must be sought after, an may be discerned. Between these extremes, I conceive this i the truth: Both understanding and will, that is, the whole soul which both understandeth and willeth, is truly sanctified wher either is truly sanctified; and the several acts of this sanctifie soul, are called several actual graces. But though grace be i both faculties, as they are called, yet it is certainly discernibl only in the will, and not in the understanding; for all acts, a they are merely in the understanding, are but imperfectly virtu ous, being but preparatory and introductory to the will, wher they are digested and perfected, as I said before. Dr. Stough ton's words are these: "As for my own part, I could neve comprehend that which divines have gone about, to be able t put a characteristical difference in the nature of knowledge, tha a man may be able to say such a knowledge is, and such a know ledge is not, a saving knowledge; but only as I use to express it, 'The sun is the greater light, but the moon hath greater in fluence on waterish bodies;' so knowledge, let it be what it will, if it be good and saving, it hath an influence on the soul. There may be a great deal of knowledge, which is not vital and prac tical, which carrieth not the heart and affections along with it; and they that have it, have not saving knowledge. But they that have the least degree of knowledge, so it be such as hath an influence to draw the heart and affections along with it, love God, and obey God, it is solid and saving knowledge." So Dr. Stoughton, in his 'Righteous Man's Plea to Happiness,' pp. 38, 39.

And, for my part, I know no mark, drawn from the mere nature of knowledge, or belief, or any mere intellectual act, by which we can discern it from what may be in an unholy person. Those that think otherwise, use to say that the knowledge and belief which is saving, is deep, lively, operative, &c. I doubt

not but this is true: but how, by the depth, we shall discern the saving sincerity directly, I know not: or how to discern it in the liveliness or operativeness, but only in its operations and effects on the will and affections, I know not. Whether it be so deep and lively as to be saving, must not be discerned immediately in itself, but in its vital, prevalent operations on the will; so that I shall dismiss all the mere acts of the understanding out of this inquiry, as being not such as a Christian can try himself immediately by: and for them that say otherwise, they place the sincerity of them in the depth and liveliness, that is, in the degree of knowledge and belief; for, no doubt, a wicked man may know and believe every particular truth which a Christian doth believe. Some learned men, I have heard, affirm, indeed, that no wicked man can believe Scripture to be the word of God; but that is a fancy that I think needs no confutation: the devils believe it, no doubt. If any say that saving knowledge is experimental, and other is not,

I answer: 1. Of matters of mere faith, we have no experience; as, that Christ is the second person, was incarnate, crucified, buried, rose again, &c.

2. Of common practicals, wicked men have experience; as, that the world is deceitful, that man is prone to sin, that Satan must be resisted, &c.

3. For those other special, internal experiences, which denominate a Christian's knowledge experimental, the mark of sincerity lieth in the experienced thing itself, rather than the knowledge of it; for example, a Christian knows experimentally what the new birth is, what it is to love God, to delight in him, &c. Now, the mark lieth not properly in his knowledge of these, but in that love, delight, and renovation, which he possesseth, and so knoweth.

It follows, therefore, that we inquire into the acts of the will, and see wherein their saving sincerity doth consist; for, except the acts of the understanding, all that may be called saving is reducible to those two words of St. Paul, 'to will,' and 'to do.' For all the other acts of the soul are nothing but *velle et nolle*; either exercised on the object as variously presented and apprehended, as absent or present, facile or difficult, &c., or exercised with that vigour as moveth the spirits in the heart, and denominates them affections or passions.

First, therefore, to begin with the proper act of willing, though of ourselves, without grace, no man ever willeth God in

Christ; yet on this willing hath God laid our salvation, n
than on any other qualification or act in ourselves whatsoe
And yet simply to will God, to will Christ, to will heaven, is
a saving act; but when God and the creature stand in comp
tion, to will God above all, and to will Christ above all,
heaven before earth, this is to will savingly; that is, to will
as God, the chief Good, and cause of good; to will Christ
Christ, the only Saviour and chief Ruler of us; and to will h
ven as the state of our chief happiness in the glorifying enj
ment of God. Not that all the sincerity of these acts lieth
the understandings apprehending God to be the chief Good
cause of it, and Christ to be the only Redeemer, &c.; for a n
may will that God, and that Christ, who is thus apprehended
the understanding, and yet not will him as he is thus app
hended. The understanding may overgo the will, and the
not follow the understanding; and this is no saving willing.
a man do know and believe ever so much, that God is the ch
Good, and do not chiefly will him, as the devils may so belie
it is not saving; yea, it is a great question whether many do
will God (not only who is apprehended to be the supreme Go
but also) *as* he is apprehended to be the supreme Good, and
love something else more than him, which they know *not* to
the chief Good, but, against their knowledge, are drawn to it
the force of sensuality, and so these men perish for all th
willing; for, certainly, if God have not ordinarily the prevaili
part of the will, that man's state is not good. When I say su
men will God, as apprehended to be the chief Good, I me
they will him under such a notion, but not with an act of w
answering that notion. I refer the term 'as' to the unde
standing's apprehension, but not to the will's action, as if
loved him as the chief Good should be loved or willed; for th
is it that is wanting, for which they perish. I propound this
the consideration of the judicious; for it is certainly worth o
consideration. It depends on the common question, wheth
the will always follow the last dictate of the practical intelle
which I shall handle elsewhere. What I have said of willin
you may easily perceive, may be said of desire and love, whi
are nothing but willing. Love is an intense, absolute willing
good, as good; desire, also, is a willing it as a good not yet e
joyed: therefore the saving sincerity of both lieth in the sam
point. Many that perish, desire God, and Christ, and heaven
and love God, and Christ, and heaven; but they desire and lo

some inferior good more. He that desireth and loveth God sincerely and savingly, desireth him and loveth him above all things else; and there lieth his sincerity.

I need not instance in hope, fear, hatred, or any of the acts or passions of the irascible; for they are therefore good, because they set against the difficulty, which is in the way of their attainment to that good which they will and love; and so their chief virtuousness lieth in that will or love which is contained in them, or supposed to them. A wicked man may fear God, but the fear of men or temporal evils is more prevalent in the trial. He may have an aversation of his mind from sin, or some low degree of hatred; it is known to him to be evil, and to hurt him; but his love to it is greater, and prevaileth against his hatred. If any doubt whether a wicked man may have the least hatred of sin, yea, as sin, or as displeasing to God, we are sure of it two ways.

1. By daily experience of some drunkards, that when they are considering how much they sin against God, and wrong themselves, their hearts rise against their own sin, (especially if the temptation be out of sight,) and they will weep, and be ready to tear their own flesh; and yet yield to the next temptation, and live weekly in committing of the sin.

2. By the experience of our own hearts before our sanctification (those that were not sanctified in infancy), many have felt that their hearts had some weak degree of dislike and hatred to the sin that captivated them. And I know divers swearers and drunkards that do so hate the same sins in their children, that they are ready to fall on them violently if they commit them.

3. And we may know it by reason too. For whatsoever a man may know to be evil, that his will may have some hatred or aversation towards, though not enough; but a wicked man may know sin to be evil; therefore he may have some hatred to it. The will may sure follow the understanding a little way, though it do not far enough. But methinks those should not contradict this, that are for the will's constant determination by the understanding.

The like I may say also of repentance, so much of it as lieth in the will; that is, the will's turning from inferior good (which it formerly chose) to God, the supreme Good, whom it now chooseth: the sincerity of this lieth in the prevailing degree, for if it be not such a change as carrieth the will more now to

God than the creature, but to God a little, and the creature more, it is not saving. And if it be not a choosing of before the creature, though it be a choosing of God in second place, it will not serve turn. And for that repent which consisteth in sorrow for sin: 1. If it be not to su degree that it prevail over our delight in sin and love to i is not saving. Many wicked men do daily repent and sin have known men that would be drunk almost daily, and s seven or eight days continue in one fit of drunkenness be ever they were sober, and yet lament it with tears, and p daily against it; and being men of much knowledge and a parts, would confess it, and condemn themselves in very mov language, and yet no means could keep them from it, but t have lived in it some ten, some twenty years. Who dare th that this was true repentance, when the apostle conclud "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die?" (Rom. viii. xiii. 2.) Yet I must tell you, that all these graces which expressed by passions of sorrow, fear, joy, hope, love, are not certainly to be tried by the passion that is in them, as by t will that is either contained in them, or supposed in them; r as acts of the sensitive, but of the rational appetite. I will r here stand on the question whether grace be in the sensitive rational appetite, as its subject, or both. Burgersdicius a others say, that moral virtue is in the sensitive only, but som thing like it in the will, but theological virtues are in the wi But, doubtless, if he do prove moral virtue to be in the sen sitive, he will prove a proportionable measure of theologic virtue to be there too. For there is no virtue, truly so calle which is not theological as well as moral.

But if there be any doubt whether un unregenerate ma may perform the same act as a true Christian, it will be espe cially about the two great and principal graces of faith and lov And for that of faith, I have said enough before. It consisteth according to the judgment of most reformed divines, partly i the understanding, partly in the will. As it is in the under standing, it is called assent or belief: and for this I hav showed before, that a wicked man may have it in some degree and that grace, as it is in the understanding, cannot be discerned directly; but only as it thence produceth those acts in the will wherein it may be discerned. There is no one truth which a true Christian may know, but a wicked man may also know it, though not with that lively degree of knowledge which will

overrule the heart and life.[n] Nor is there any one truth which a true Christian may believe, but a wicked man may also believe it. If any deny this, let them name me one. And do not our divines confess as much against the papists, who place faith in bare assent? And do they not expound James's (the devils believe) of such an assent? If this were not so, it were an easy matter to try and know one's own sincerity, and so to have assurance of salvation? For we might presently name such or such an axiom, (as, that the Scripture is the word of God, or the like,) and ask whether we do know or believe this to be true, and so might quickly be resolved. For it is the heart or will that is deceitful above all things, but the bare acts of the understanding may more easily be discerned, as whether we know or assent to such an axiom or not; though I know also that even the understanding participateth of the guilefulness, and may be somewhat strange to itself.

But some will say that no wicked man can believe the pardon of his own sins,[o] or assent to the truth of this axiom, 'My sins are pardoned.' Answ. I confess, so many have harped on this string heretofore, that I am ashamed that the papists should read it in our writings, and thereby have that occasion of hardening them in their errors, and of insulting over the reformed doctrine. I confess, no wicked man (*in sensu composito*) can believe for the pardon of sin, or hath such a faith as pardon is promised to; but that they may believe their sins are pardoned, and seriously believe it, did not error make it necessary, I should be ashamed to bestow any words to prove it. 1. A wicked man may (in my judgment without any great difficulty) believe an untruth, especially which he would fain have to be true, though every untruth he cannot believe. But this is an untruth to every wicked man that his sins are pardoned, or, even by the Antinomian's confession, it is untrue of all wicked men not elected; and an untruth which he would fain have to be true, (for what man is so perverse in his fancy as to doubt whether a wicked man would have his sins pardoned,) therefore he may believe it. 2. That which is one of the chief pillars in the

[n] Quamvis quis non habet veram et salvificam in Christo fidem, potest tamen in professione et doctrina veritatis bonam habere conscientiam, ita ut sciat veram esse illam doctrinam quam profitetur et docet, &c.—*Trigl. de Trina Gratia*, p. 943.

[o] I know, *fide verè divinâ*, he cannot believe it because God never spake it; no more hath he told any of us in his word, that our sins are actually pardoned.

kingdom of the devil, and the master, deceiving, damning is not surely inconsistent with a wicked man's condition: even such is the ungrounded belief that his sins are pard (commonly called presumption, and false faith) therefore, 3. If it be the main work of a skilful, faithful ministry, to wicked men from such an ungrounded belief, and experi tells us that all means will hardly do it, and yet that God it on all before he bring them by the ministry to true convers then surely it is more than possible for a wicked man to such a belief. But Scripture, and a world of lamentable e rience, prove the antecedent; what do such writings as Hook Bolton's, Whately's, &c. else drive at? therefore, &c. 4. that the actual pardon of our sins is not properly *credendum* a material object of faith, I have proved elsewhere, and th fore need not stand on it now.

2. And for those acts of faith which are directly in and the will, I know not one of them, considered in the nature the act, without the prevalent degree, which a wicked man not perform. For the most proper and immediate act, 'willi which containeth a choice of Christ, and a consent that shall be ours, together with his benefits, this I have before m manifest to be consistent with an unregenerate state. If will affirm, that a wicked man cannot be willing to have par of all his sins, justification, and salvation from hell, I think not worthy my writing six lines to confute them; sense will it sufficiently. That this man cannot desire, or choose, or w holiness, and glory with Christ, more heartily, strongly, prevailingly, than his pleasures or inferior good, I easily knowledge: for in that gradual defect consisteth his unsour ness.[p] But that he may will, choose, accept, or desire, holin and glory in a second place, next to his carnal delights or ferior good, is to me beyond doubt. And, accordingly, for obtaining of these, he may will or accept of Christ himself t gives them. This I shall prove anon, when we speak of love.

And for that act of faith, which most affirm to be peculia the justifying act, that is, affiance, resting on Christ, recu bency, adherence, apprehension of him, &c., these, almo

[p] Notitiam et assensum quendam non Calvinus tantum, sed et remons ipsi tribuunt etiam dæmonibus. Fiducia male fundata, electionis opinio, fructus evanidi, qui sine bono et honesto corde existunt, non magis argu temporarios esse vere fideles, quàm similitudo probat simiam esse ex gen humano.—*Amesius Antisynod.* in art. v. c. 8. p. (mihi) 354.

all metaphorical terms, contain, not one, but many acts, all which are most frequently found in the ungodly. For we undoubtedly know it; 1. By experience of ourselves whilst we were in their state; 2. And, by constant experience of the vilest sinners, that they not only undissemblingly rest on Christ, (that is, trust verily to be pardoned and saved by him, and expect it from him,) but also that this is the strongest encouragement to them in sinning, and we have need to lay all our batteries against this bulwark of presumption. Alas! to the grief of my soul, my frequent and almost daily experience forceth me to know this, whatsoever men write from their speculations to the contrary. I labour with my utmost skill to convince common drunkards, swearers, worldlings, &c., of their misery, and I cannot do it for my life; and this false faith is the main reason. They tell me, I know I am a sinner, and so are you, and all, as well as I. But if any man sin "we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;" I put my whole trust in him, and cast my salvation on him; for, "He that believeth in him, shall not perish, but have everlasting life." If I tell them of the nature of true faith, and the necessity of obedience, they answer me that they know their own hearts better than I, and are sure they do really rest on Christ, and trust him with their souls. And for obedience, they will mend as well as they can, and as God will give them grace; and, in the mean time, they will not boast as the Pharisee, but cry, "Lord, be merciful to me a sinner;" and that I shall never drive them from believing and trusting in Christ for mercy, because they be not so good as others, when Christ tells them that men are not justified by works, but by faith, and he that believeth shall be saved. This is the case of the most notorious sinners, many of them, and I am most confident they speak as they think: and from this ungrounded confidence in Christ, I cannot remove them. Where now is any difference in the nature of this affiance, and that of true believers? If you say that it brings not forth fruit, and therefore is unsound, that is true: but that is only an extrinsical difference in the effects, and speaks not the difference in the nature of the act itself.[q] But I have spoken of this more fully elsewhere.

[q] Learned Rivet saith the very same as I, of the difference between a temporary and true believer. Discrimen ergo inter eos et vere fideles hoc est, quod quamvis utrique ex animo verbum amplectantur, non tamen utrique ex tali animo, quo aliis omnibus verbum præferatur. Nam πρόσκαιροι leviter et perfunctorie credunt, &c. unde est quod vitam suam amant plus quam Chris-

But the greatest doubt is, whether, in loving God and Chr as Mediator, there be not more than a gradual differer between the regenerate and unregenerate; and I shall show y that there is not: for it is undeniable that an unholy pers may love God and the Mediator, and as undeniable that th cannot love God above all, till they are regenerate. The lat I take for granted. The former, if any deny, is thus prove 1. That which the understanding apprehendeth to be goc both in itself and to the person, that the will may in sor measure love. But an unregenerate man's understanding m apprehend God to be good, both in himself and to his perso therefore, he may in some measure love him. That wicked m may believe that God is good, is no more to be doubted of, thi that they may believe there is a God. For he that believe there is a God, must needs believe that he is good. And th he may believe that God is good to him also, is evident, thu 1. Men know that they have all their temporal, corporal merci from God, (which are to them the sweetest of all,) and ther fore for these, and the continuance of them, they may apprehen God to be good to them, and so love him. 2. And Scriptur and constant experience tell us, that it is usual with wicke men, not only to apprehend the goodness of prosperity, bu thence mistakingly to gather, that God doth specially favour an love them as his people to salvation. 3. Also, nothing is mor common with them almost, than from the thoughts of God' mercifulness and goodness, and from mistaken seeming evi dences in themselves, to conclude most confidently that thei sins are pardoned, and that God will not condemn them, but wil save them as certainly as any other. Also, that Christ having died in their stead, and made satisfaction for all their sins they shall, through him, be pardoned, justified, and saved Many a wicked man doth as confidently believe that God loveth him through Christ, and doth as confidently thank God daily in his prayers for vocation, adoption, justification, and assured hope of glory, as if they were all his own indeed. Nay, out of the apprehensions of some extraordinary love and mercy of God to him above others, he oft giveth thanks as the Pharisee, "Lord, I thank thee that I am not as this publican." And, doubtless,

tum; fiatque ut securi sint, nec sibi caveant ab insidiis diaboli, deinde ut in precibus gratiarum actione, et omnibus erga proximum officiis languidi fiant, et remissi: cum justificans fides etiam imbecilla, sollicita sit, nec credentem animo claro esse sinat; studiumque precum excitet, illudque anxium et intentum.—*Rivet. Disp. de Persev.* sect. vi. pp. 210, 211.

all their apprehensions of love, may produce some love to God again. As the grounded faith and hope of the godly, produceth a solid saving love, so the ungrounded faith and hope of the wicked, produceth a slight and common love, agreeable to the cause of it. As Christ hath a common love to the better sort of wicked men, more than to the worst, he looked on the young man (Mark xiii. 21, 22) and loved him, and said, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God," so may such men have a common love to Christ, and that above the ordinary sort of the ungodly. For I am persuaded there is no man so wicked among us, who believeth, indeed, that Christ is the Son of God and the Saviour, but he hath some love to Christ, more or less. For, 4. God hath been pleased to give those advantages to the christian religion, above all other religions among us, which may easily procure some love to Christ from ungodly men. It is the religion of our country; it is a credit to be a Christian; it is the religion of our ancestors, of our parents, and dearest friends; it is that which princes favour, and all men speak well of. Christ is in credit among us; every man acknowledgeth him to be God, and the Redeemer of the world, and therefore on the same grounds, or better, as a Turk doth love and honour Mahomet, and a Jew, Moses, may a wicked Christian in some kind love and honour Christ, yea, and venture his life against that man that will speak against him, as Dr. Jackson and Mr. Pink have largely manifested.

Sect. XIV. If any object that it is not God or Jesus Christ that these men love, but his benefits, I answer, it is God and the Redeemer for his benefits. Only here is the unsoundness, which undoes them: they love his inferior, earthly blessings better than him; and for this they perish.

Having thus viewed these several graces, and found that it is the prevalent degree wherein their sincerity, as they are saving, doth consist, I will next briefly try this point upon some of the ordinary marks of sincerity besides, that are given by divines; in which I shall not speak a word in quarrelling at other men's judgments, for I shall speak but of those that I was wont to make use of myself; but only what I conceive necessary to prevent the delusion and destruction of souls.

1. One mark of sincerity, commonly delivered, is this: to love the children of God because they are such. I the rather name this, because many a soul hath been deluded about it. Multitudes of those that since are turned haters and persecutors

of the godly, did once, without dissembling, love them; y multitudes that are killing them by thousands, when they dif from them in opinion, or stand in the way of their carnal in rest, did once love them, and do love others of them still. have proved before, that a wicked man may have some love Christ, and then no doubt but he may have some love to Christian, and that for his sake. Quest. But may he love godly man for his godliness? Answ. Yes, no doubt; the before mentioned did so. If a wicked man may have some d gree of love to godliness, then he may have some degree of lo to the godly for it; but that he may have some degree of lo to godliness, is evident: 1. By experience of others, and of t godly before conversion, who know this was their own cas 2. The understanding of an ungodly man may know that gra and godliness is good, and therefore his will may in some degr choose and effect it; 3. That which drew moral heathens strongly to love men for their virtue and devotion, the san principle may as well draw a man that is bred among Christia to love a Christian for his virtues and devotion to Christ.

Object. But doth not the Scripture say, "that we know w are translated from death to life, because we love the brethren?

Answ. Yes; but then you may easily know it speaks of sin cere love. So it saith, "Whoever believeth shall be saved;" an yet (Matt. xiii.) Christ showeth that many believe, who yet fa away and perish, for want of deep rooting: so that the sincerit of this love also lieth in the degrees; and, therefore, when th promise is made to it, or it made a mark of true Christians, yo must still understand it of that degree which may be called sin cere and saving. The difference lieth plainly here. An unsoun Christian, as he hath some love to Christ, and grace, and godli ness, but more to his profits, or pleasures, or credit in the world so he hath some love to the godly, as such, being convinced tha the righteous is more excellent than his neighbour; but not s much as he hath to these carnal things. Whereas the soun Christian, as he loves Christ and grace above all worldly things so it is Christ in a Christian that he so loves, and the Christia for Christ's sake above all such things: so that when a carna professor will think it enough to wish them well,[r] but will no

[r] If a brother or sister be naked and destitute of daily food, and one of yo say to them, Depart in peace, be you warmed and filled; but give them no those things which are needful to the body, &c. (Jam. ii. 15, 16.) Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us; and we

hazard his worldly happiness for them, if he were called to it; the sincere believer will not only love them, but relieve them, and value them so highly, that, if he were called to it, he would part with his profits, or pleasures, for their sakes. For example, in Queen Mary's days, when the martyrs were condemned to the fire, there were many great men that really loved them, and wished them well, and their hearts grieved in pity for them, as knowing them to be in the right; but yet they loved their honour, and wealth, and safety, so much better, that they would sit on the bench, yea, and give sentence for their burning, for fear of hazarding their worldly happiness. Was this sincere, saving love to the brethren? Who dares think so, especially in them that went on to do thus? Yet, what did it want but a more intense degree, which might have prevailed over their love to carnal things? Therefore, Christ will not, at the last judgment, inquire after the bare act of love; but, whether it so far prevailed over our love to carnal interest as to bring us to relieve, clothe, visit them, &c., and Christ in them: that is, to part with these things for them when we are called to it. Not that every man that loves the godly is bound to give them all he hath in their necessity; for God hath directed us in what order to bestow and lay out our estates; and we must begin at ourselves, and so to our families, &c.; so that God may call for our estates some other ways. But mark it, you false-hearted worldlings, he that doth not so much love the ordinary sort of the godly, and Christ in them, as that he can find in his heart to bestow all his worldly substance for their relief, if God did not require him otherwise to expend it, this man hath no saving love to the godly. If, therefore, you would not cheat yourselves, as multitudes in this age have done, about your love to the brethren, try not by the bare act; but by the radicated, prevalent degree of your love.

2. Another ordinary mark of sincerity is this: when a man is the same in secret before God alone as he is in public before men, making conscience of secret as well as of open duties. But, no doubt, as many a godly man may be the more restrained from sin, and incited to good, from public, and perhaps carnal, motives, and so may be better, in appearance, publicly than he is

ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? Let us not love in word and tongue, but in deed and in truth. (1 John iii. 16—18.)

in secret; for all men have some hypocrisy in them; so ma an unregenerate man may make conscience of secret duties well as open; yea, even of the thoughts of his heart. But, st both secret duties and open are at the disposal of his carnal i terest; for he will follow them no further than is consistent w that; so that this mark doth but show a man's sincerity in o position to gross hypocrisy or dissembling, but not the sincer of grace as it is saving.

3. Another ordinary mark of sincerity is thus delivered: wh a man loves the closest and most searching preaching of the wor and that which putteth on to the highest degree of holiness. he therefore love it because it putteth himself on to the highe degree of holiness, and so far love it as that he is willing to l searched and put on by it; and if he therefore come to this ligh that he may know his evil thereby, that he may mortify it, an may get Christ and his interest advanced in his soul; then it a sign that he hath that degree which I have mentioned, wherei sincerity of saving grace doth consist: but many a wicked ma doth love a searching preacher in other respects, and one tha draweth men to the highest strain, partly because he may love t have other men searched, and their hypocrisy discovered, and b put on to the highest, and partly because himself may be of, an delight in, the highest strain of opinion, though his heart wil not be true to his principles; nay, many a man thinks that h may the more safely be a little more indulgent to his carnal in- terest in heart and life, because he is of the strictest opinion, and therefore may love to hear the strictest preachers. His con- science is so blind, and dull in the application, that he can easily overlook the inconsistency of his judgment, and his heart and practice. O how glad is he when he hears a rousing sermon, because, thinks he, this meets with such a man or such a man; this fits the profane and lower sort of professors. So that, in these respects, he may love a searching preacher.

4. Another common mark of sincerity is, when a man hath no known sin which he is not willing to part with. This is a true and sound mark indeed; for it signifieth not only a dislike, nor only a hatred of sin, but such a degree as is prevalent in the will, as I have before described: that Christ's interest in the will is prevalent over all the interest of the flesh. So that this is but, in effect, the same mark that I have before delivered. Except this willingness to part with all sin should be but a cold, inconstant wish, which is accompanied with a greater and more

prevalent love to it, and desire to enjoy it; and then who dare think that it is any mark of saving sincerity? The like I might say of hatred to sin, love to good, and many the like marks, that the sincerity lieth in the prevalent degree; so also of the spirit of prayer, which is another mark. The spirit of prayer, so far as it is proper to the saints, lieth in desire after the things prayed for, with the other graces which in prayer are exercised; for an hypocrite may have as excellent words as the best, and as many of them. Now these desires must be such prevalent desires as is aforesaid.

I think, if I could stand to mention all the other marks of grace, so far as I remember, it would appear that the life and truth of them all lieth in this one, as being the very point wherein saving sincerity doth consist, viz., in the prevalency of Christ's interest in the soul, above the interest of inferior good; and so in the degree, not in the bare nature of any act.

Sect. XV. 3. To this end, let us but briefly inquire further into the scripture way of discovering sincerity, and see whether it do not fully confirm what I say. Christ saith, "He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me," &c. (Matt. x. 37.) So Luke xiv. 26: "If any man come to me, and hate not" (that is, love not less) "his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, and his own life, he cannot be my disciple: and whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple." So ver. 33: "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." Here, you see, sincerity is plainly laid, not in mere love to Christ, but in the prevalent degree of love, as Christ is compared to other things. And for obedience, Christ shows it. (Matt. xxv.; Luke xix. 20, &c.) Therefore Christ saith, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many shall seek to enter, and not be able." (Luke xiii. 24.) Seeking comes short of striving, in the degree. And Paul saith, "They which run in a race, run all, but one receiveth the price: so run that ye may obtain." (1 Cor. ix. 24.) So ver. 26, 27, and Heb. xii. 1. And Christ commandeth, "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." (Matt. vi. 33.) Showing plainly, that the saving sincerity of our seeking lieth in this comparative degree; in preferring God's kingdom before the things below. So he saith, "Labour not for the meat that perisheth" (not in comparison), "but for the meat that endureth

to everlasting life, which the Son will give you." (John vi. 27.) So Heb. xi. 6, 14, 16, 25, 26, 35, and xiii. 14; Col. iii. 1; Rom. ii. 7; Luke xvii. 33, and xii. 30, 31; Am. v. 4, 8, 14; Isa. lviii. 2, 3, and i. 17; Prov. viii. 17; Psal. cix. 2.) Also, an hundred places might be produced, wherein Christ sets himself still against the world as his competitor, and promiseth life on the condition that we prefer Him before it. To this end are all those precepts for suffering, and bearing the cross, and denying ourselves, and forsaking all. The merchant that buyeth this pearl, must sell all that he hath to buy it, though he give nothing for it. All the beginning of Rom. viii., as ver. 1—14, do fully show that our work and warfare lieth in a perpetual combat between the flesh and spirit, between their several interests, motives, ends, and desires; and that which prevaileth shows what we are. When the flesh prevaileth, finally, it is certain death: and where the Spirit prevaileth, it is certain life. What can be more plain than that sincerity of grace, as saving, is here placed in the comparative or prevailing degree? So also Gal. v. 17, 24: "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary one to the other. But they that are Christ's, have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts thereof." Therefore are we charged, to make no provision for the flesh to satisfy its lusts. (Rom. xiii. 14.) So 1 John ii. 16; Ephes. ii. 3; Gal. v. 16—19; John i. 13, and iii. 6. And Christ shows fully, (Matt. xiii. 5, 23, &c.,) that the difference between those that fall away, and those that persevere, proceedeth hence, that one giveth deep rooting to the Gospel, and the other doth not. The seed is rooted in both, or else it would not bring forth a blade and imperfect fruit; but the stony ground gives it not deep rooting, which the good ground doth. Doth not this make it as plain as can be spoken, that sincerity lieth in degree, and not in any physical difference either of habits or acts? The like may be gathered from all those texts of Scripture, where salvation is promised to those that overcome, or on condition of overcoming; not to all that fight, but to all that overcome; as Rev. ii. 7, 11, 17, 26; iii. 5, 12, 13; xxi. 7: "He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my son." So 1 John v. 4, 5: "He that is born of God, overcometh the world. And they overcame the wicked one." (1 John ii. 13; iv. 4.) So Luke xi. 22. And the state of wicked men is described by being overcome by sin and the

world. (2 Pet. ii. 19, 20.) Fighting is the same action naturally in both; but the valiant, strong, and constant, conquer; when the feeble, faint, and cowardly, and impatient, do turn their backs, and are overcome. So Christ saith, "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." Now violence is not any distinct action, but a different degree of action. Nor can you say that all these places speak only of outward action. For no doubt but it is inward violence more than outward, and the inward actions of the soul intended, more than the motions of the body, which lay hold on the kingdom, and make us conquerors. So the saints are described in Scripture by such gradual and prevalent different acts. As David; "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none in earth that I desire in comparison of thee." (Psalm lxxiii. 26, 27.) "Thy loving kindness is better than life." (Psalm lxiii. 3.) "The Lord is my portion," &c. A wicked man may esteem God and his loving kindness; but not as his portion, nor better than life. So the wicked are called "lovers of pleasure more than God." (2 Tim. iii. 4.) The godly may love pleasure, but not more than God. The Pharisees loved the praise of men more than the honour which is from God. (John xii. 43.) A godly man may love the praise of men, but not more, &c. See also, Job iii. 21, xxiii. 12; Psalm xlvii., xix. 10, lii. 3, cxix. 72. Very many more texts might be produced which prove this point, but these may suffice.

Sect. XVI. 5. The next thing which I have to do is, to answer those objections which may be brought against it, and which, I confess, have sometime seemed of some weight to myself.

Object. 1. Do not all divines say that it is not the measure of grace, but the truth; not the quantity, but the quality, that we must judge ourselves by? And doth not Christ say that he despiseth not the day of small things, and that he will not quench the smoking flax; and if we had faith, which is as a grain of mustard-seed, we may do wonders, &c.

Answ. All this is true of sincere grace, but not of unsincere. Now I have showed you that except it be of a prevalent degree, it is not savingly sincere. If you love God a little, and the world a deal more, will any man dare to think that it is a sincere saving love, when the Scripture saith, "He that loveth the world, the love of the Father is not in him?" that is, there is no sincere saving love in him; for no doubt the young man had

some love to Christ that yet forsook him, because he loved the world more: or else, 1. Christ would not have loved him; 2. Nor would the man have gone away from him in sorrow. But if you love Christ ever so little more than the world or inferior good, though it be but as a grain of mustard-seed, it will be saving, and Christ will accept it. Cicero can tell you that friendship, or the sincerity of love to a friend, consisteth not in every act and degree of undissembled love. If a man love you a little, and a thousand men much more, or if he love his wealth so much better than you, that he cannot find in his heart to be at any loss for your sake, this man is not your friend; he doth truly love you, but he hath no true, sincere friendship or friendly love to you; for that consisteth in such a degree as will enable a man to do and suffer for his friend. If a woman love her husband without dissembling, but yet loves twenty men better, and prostitutes herself to them, she hath true love, but no true conjugal love to her husband; for that consisteth in an higher degree. In a word, lay Christ, as it were, in one end of the balance in your estimation, and all your carnal interest, and all inferior good, in the other, and see which you love most; and every grain of love which Christ hath from you more than the world and inferior things, he will accept it as sincere: and in this sense you must not judge of yourselves by the measure of your grace, but by the truth: that is, not by any higher degree, if you have once that degree which makes it true and saving. And I do not think that you will meet with any sober divine that will tell you, that if you will love God ever so little without dissembling, yet he will accept it, though you love your lusts before him. Nor will any sober man tell you that if you love the godly without dissembling, God will accept it, though you love your carnal interest so much better; that if they hunger or thirst, or are naked, or in want, you cannot find in your heart to relieve them; or if they be in prison for a good cause, you dare not be seen to visit them.

Object. 2. But, perhaps you will say, If this be so, then there is no specific difference between saving grace and common.

Answ. I told you before that you must distinguish betwixt a physical specification, and a moral. The confounding of our physics and ethics in divinity, hath made and continued abundance of controversies, and much confusion. In a word, there is a moral, specific difference grounded but in a physical, gradual

difference, both of habits and acts, as is already more fully opened.

Object. 3. But, you may say, If there be such a difference in degrees, then how can a man know the truth of his grace, or ever get assurance; for who can discern just the parting point? Who can say, 'Just such a degree of love or faith is sincere and saving, and the next degree short of it is not?'

Answ. This objection being of most weight, I shall answer it in these propositions:

1. Where the prevailing degree is not discernible, there no true assurance can be had, in an ordinary way; and where it is very hard to discern the degree, there it will be as hard to get assurance.

2. Therefore, those that have the smallest degree of saving grace, do not use to have any assurance of salvation. Assurance is the privilege of stronger Christians, and not of weak ones, or of all that shall be saved. A little is hardly discernible from none in nature.

3. And it seemeth that the reason of God's disposal herein is very evident: for if God should let men clearly see the least measure of love, faith, fear, or obedience, that is saving; and the greatest measure of sin that will stand with sincerity, and say, 'Just so far thou mayst sin, or mayst deny me thy love, and yet be saved and sincere,' then it might have been a strong temptation to men to sin as far as ever they may, and to neglect their graces. I know some will say that assurance breeds not security. But that great measure of corruption which liveth with our small measure of grace, will make assurance an occasion of security and boldness in sinning. A strong Christian may bear and improve assurance, but so cannot the weakest; and therefore God useth not to give assurance to weakest Christians.

But, then, mistake me not, but remember that by weak Christians I do not mean those that are weak in gifts, and common parts and expressions; nor by strong Christians, those that excel in these. Those are weak Christians that have no more love to God, nor desire after Christ, than will just stand with sincerity; and that have as much love to the world and flesh, and take as much liberty to sin, as ever will stand with salvation. And those are strong Christians who strongly love God, and have mortified and mastered their corruptions.

4. Where grace is thus strong and in a great degree, there it

is easily discernible, and therefore to such, assurance is ordinary, except in a fit of temptation, revolting, or desertion.

5. But the chief part of my answer is this: It is not the degree of grace absolutely in itself considered, wherein sincerity doth consist, nor which we must inquire after in trial, but it is the degree in a comparative sense; as when we compare God and the creature, and consider which we desire, love, fear, &c., more; and, therefore, here it is far easier to try by the degree. You know that gold is not current except it be weight as well as pure metal. Now, if you put your gold in one end of the scales, and nothing in the other, you cannot judge whether it be weight or not; but if you put the weights against it, then you may discern it. If it be downright weight, you may discern it without either difficulty or doubt. If it be but a grain overweight, you may yet discern it; though it is possible it may be so little, that the scales will scarcely turn, and then you will not discern so easily, which is the heavier end. But if it want much, then you will as easily on the other side discern the defectiveness. So thus here: if God had said absolutely, 'So much love you must have to me, or you cannot be saved,' then it were hard to know when we reach the degree. But you must, as I said, put Christ and heaven in one end, and all things below in the other, and then you may well find out the sincerity in the degree. Every grain that Christ hath more than the creature, is sincere and saving.

Sect. XVII. 6. Lastly, having thus given you my judgment in this great point, I will give you some hint of the necessity of it, and the danger of mistaking in this case.

And, 1, I am certain that the misunderstanding of this point hath occasioned the delusion of multitudes of men: even common profane men (much more those that are not far from the kingdom of God), when they hear that it is not the quantity or measure of grace, that we must try by, but the quality, and that the least seed or spark is saving as well as the greatest degree, they are presently confident of the soundness of their state. Alas, how many have I known thus deceived! When they have heard that the least true desire is accepted with God for the deed, they knew that they had desires that were not counterfeit, and therefore doubted not but God did accept them, when in the mean time their desire to pleasure, and profits, and honour, was so much stronger, that it overcame their weak desires after God and goodness, and made them live in the daily

practice of gross sin: and they knew not that the sincerity of their desire did lie in the prevailing degree. God doth indeed accept the will for the deed, and the best are fain to cry out with Paul, "To will is present with me, but to do I find not;" in regard of those higher parts of spiritual duty, and in the avoiding of divers infirmities and passions; but then it is only the prevailing bent and act of the will which is thus accepted.

So have, I know, multitudes been deceived by their small degree of love to the godly, hearing that the least was a certain sign of grace, and knowing themselves to love them without counterfeiting, who yet have since been carried to be their constant persecutors, and shed their blood; the like I may say of other marks. And doth it not concern people, then, to be better grounded in this?

2. And, doubtless, the mistake of this hath caused many sincere Christians to take up their comforts on deceitful grounds, which accordingly prove deceitful comforts, and leave them oft in a sorrowful case (though not in a damnable), when they come to make use of them. Satan knows how to shake such ill-grounded comforts, and he usually doth it in a man's greatest agonies, letting them stand till then, that he may have advantage by their fall for our greater terror. When he can put a poor Christian to a loss many times that hath the soundest evidences, what may he do by those that either have none but unsound ones, or know them not at least?

3. Moreover, the ignorance of this truth hath caused some ministers to wrong the holy God, and abuse poor souls, and misapply the promises; absolving those whom God condemneth, by mistaking the meaning of that saying, "That the least degree is saving as well as the greatest;" which is true only of the least prevailing degree, but not of the greatest that it overmastered by the prevalency of its contrary.

4. And to my knowledge this hath been no small hinderance to many to keep them from fruitfulness and growth in grace. They have been more securely contented with their low degree: whereas if they had known that their very sincerity lieth in the prevalency of the degree, they would have looked more after it. For them that say that assurance will make men strive for increase, I answered before:[a] If there were no contrary corruption in strength in us, then I confess it would be as they say.

[a] I unfeignedly acknowledge with the Synod of Dort (Act. de Art. v. thes. 12. p. 260.) that to those Christians that God judgeth fit to enjoy assurance,

5. And lastly, the ignorance of this hath been no small cause of keeping the godly in low degrees of assurance and comfort, by keeping them from the right way of attaining them. If they had considered, that both the saving sincerity of their graces lieth in the prevailing degree, and also that the higher degree they attain the clearer and more unquestionable will be their evidence, and consequently, the easier and more infallible will be their assurance; this would have taught them to have spent those thoughts and hours in labouring after growth in grace, which they spent in inquiring after the lowest degree which may stand with sincerity, and in seeking for that in themselves which was almost undiscernible.

To conclude, this doctrine is exceedingly comfortable to the poor soul that groans, and mourns, and longs for Christ, and knows that though he be not what he should and would be, yet he would be what he should be, and had rather have Christ than all the world. God hath the prevailing degree of this man's will, desire, and love.

And as necessary is this doctrine for caution to all, that as they love their souls, they take heed how they try and judge of their condition by the bare nature of any dispositions or actions, without regard to the prevalency of degree.

I advise all Christians, therefore, in the fear of God, as ever they would have assurance and comforts that will not deceive them, that they make it the main work of their lives to grow in grace, to strengthen and advance Christ's interest in their souls, and to weaken and get down the interest of the flesh. And take heed of those pestilent principles of presumption, which would deceive you by the bare name and specious title of free grace; which make Christ, as justifier only, to be the object of justifying faith, and not Christ as your Head, Husband, or King; which tell you, that you have fulfilled the law, and satisfied it fully in Christ; and so need no more than to get the sense of pardon, or show your thankfulness; which tell you that if you do but believe that you are pardoned, and shall be saved, it shall be so indeed; as if this were the faith that must justify and save you. Deceivers may persuade you that Christ hath done all, and left you nothing to do for your justification or salvation; but you may easily see, from what I have said, that to mortify the flesh, to

it is no inlet to security or licentiousness, but a great exciter of their graces. But I think it would be far otherwise to those that are unfit to enjoy and use it: that is, to the lower and worse sort of sincere Christians.

overcome Satan and the world, and to this end to stand always armed upon our watch, and valiantly and patiently to fight it out, is a matter of more concernment both to our assurance and salvation than many do consider. Indeed, it is so great a part of our very baptismal vow, and covenant of Christianity, that he that performeth it not, is yet no more than a nominal Christian, whatsoever his parts and profession may be; and, therefore, that Christ whom they trusted in, and whose free grace they boasted of, will profess to these professors, "I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." (Matt. vii. 23.) "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth who are his; but let him that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity;" (2 Tim. ii. 19;) or else he shall never find himself among the sealed. "Know you not, that to whom you yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants you are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience to righteousness?" (Rom. vi. 16.) Not every one that seeketh, or runneth, or fighteth, much less that presumptuously believeth and trusteth, but he that overcometh, shall have the hidden manna, the white stone, the new name, the white raiment, and power over the nations; he shall eat of the tree of life in the midst of God's paradise, and shall not be hurt of the second death; he shall be confessed by Christ before his Father and the angels; yea, he will make him a pillar in the temple of God, and he shall go out no more; he will write on him the name of his God, and the name of the city of his God, New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from his God: and his new name. Yea, he will grant him to sit with him in his throne, as himself overcame, and is set down with his Father in his throne. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." (Rev. ii. 7, 11, 17, 26, and iii. 5, 12, 21, 22.)

CHAP. XII.

Use IV.—*The Reason of the Saints' Afflictions here.*

Sect. I. A further necessary use we must make of the present doctrine is this:[t] to inform us why the people of God do suffer so much in this life. What wonder, when you see their

[t] Read Dr. Stoughton's 'Love-sick Spouse.'

rest doth yet remain! They are not yet come to their resting place. We would all fain have continual prosperity, because it is easy and pleasing to the flesh; but we consider not the unreasonableness of such desires. We are like children, who, if they see any thing which their appetite desireth, do cry for it: and if you tell them that it is unwholesome, or hurtful for them, they are never the more quieted; or if you go about to heal any sore that they have, they will not endure you to hurt them, though you tell them that they cannot otherwise be healed; their sense is too strong for their reason, and therefore reason doth little persuade them. Even so it is with us when God is afflicting us. He giveth us reasons why we must bear them, so that our reason is often convinced and satisfied; and yet we cry and complain still, and we rest satisfied never the more. It is not reason, but ease that we must have. What cares the flesh for Scripture and argument, if it still suffer and smart? These be but wind and words, which do not move or abate its pain. Spiritual remedies may cure the spirit's maladies; but that will not content the flesh. But, methinks, Christians should have another palate than that of the flesh, to try and relish providences by: God hath purposely given them the Spirit to subdue and overrule the flesh. And therefore I shall here give them some reasons of God's dealing in their present sufferings, whereby the equity and mercy therein may appear: and they shall be only such as are drawn from the reference that these afflictions have to our rest, which being a Christian's happiness, and ultimate end, will direct him in judging of all estates and means. Though if we intended the full handling of this subject, abundance more considerations, very useful, might be added. Especially, we should direct Christians to remember the sin that procured them, the blood and mercy which sanctifieth them,[n] the fatherly love that ordereth them, and the far greater sufferings that are naturally our due. But I shall now chiefly tell you, how they further the saints in the way to their rest.

[n] Non mutat legem (Adamo) Deus, sed mitigat rigorem, et justitiam temperat misericordia: remittens peccatum resipiscentibus, et pœnas æternas in temporales convertens, propter filium mediatorem, quem modo promiserat. Hic primus est fructus quem trepidi parentes in summis illis angustiis, ex fide evangelii percipiunt, quod non percutiuntur maledictione, et morte, juxta meritum, &c. Deinde quod non impune quidem dimittuntur: pœna vero eis irrogatur tolerabilis, immo pro pœna tantum castigatio.—*D. Paræus* in Gen. iii. 16. p. (mihi) 555. Non enim inflixit ei mala, nisi quæ ei fuerat minatus. —*Paræus* in Gen. ii. p. 362. So then even castigatory penalties are the effects of the threatening of the first law or covenant. De afflictionibus qui-

Sect. II. 1. Consider then, that labour and trouble are the common way to rest, both in the course of nature and of grace; can there possibly be rest, without motion and weariness? Do you not travel and toil first, and then rest you afterwards? The day for labour goes first, and then the night for rest doth follow. Why should we desire the course of grace to be perverted, any more than we would do the course of nature; seeing this is as perfect and regular as the other? God did once dry up the sea to make a passage for his people; and once made the sun in the firmament to stand still; but must he do so always, or as oft as we would have him? It is his established decree, "that through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of heaven," (Acts xiv. 22,) and "that if we suffer with him, we shall also be glorified with him." (2 Tim. ii. 22.) And what are we, that God's statutes should be reversed for our pleasure?[x] As Bildad said to Job, "Shall the earth be forsaken for thee, or the rock be removed out of his place?" (Job xviii. 4.) So, must God pervert his established order for thee?

Sect. III. 2. Consider also, that afflictions are exceedingly useful to us, to keep us from mistaking our resting place, and so taking up short of it.[y] A Christian's motion heavenwards is voluntary, and not constrained. Those means, therefore, are most profitable to him, which help his understanding and will in this prosecution. The most dangerous mistake that our souls are capable of, is, to take the creature for God, and earth

buscunque quod sint peccati pœnæ, loquuntur plurima dicta. Lev. xxvi. 18; Dan. ix. 11; John v. 14, &c.—*Paræus*, ibid. p. 363. Separatio animæ à corpore per mortem, est pœna peccati, per se: fidelibus autem fit transitus in fœlicitatem, per accidens.—*Idem*, p. 370. Mors sic est à Satanæ et hominis peccato invecta, ut interim sit justissimum Dei flagellum quo punit peccatum, et justitiam suam exequitur. Proinde mors conjuncta est cum sensu iræ divinæ in omnibus quibus peccata non sunt remissa per Christum.—*Paræus*, ib. p. 404. This is the sound meaning, about the nature and causes of chastisement.—See him, p. 371—373, 383, reconciling this with full pardon, most solidly of any man that I have read.

[x] On this consideration the true Christian endureth labours, and torments, and afflictions; not as the valiant sort of the philosophers, in hope that his present suffering will cease, or that they shall yet partake of delights here again: but knowledge hath begot in him a most firm persuasion of hope that he shall receive the things that are to come. Therefore he doth not only despise the sufferings, but all the delights also that are here below.—*Clemen. Alex. Stromat.* lib. vii.

[y] They say those stones are happy of which they make temples: but what pebble-stone would not bless itself to see how those precious stones are knocked and hewed with the hammer? But all this is before we come to the temple; where there is no noise of hammer. Ut ibi solo amoris glutino copulemur; ut Greg. Mor.—Dr. Stoughton's 'Love-sick Spouse,' p. 113. Psal. xxx. 6, 7.

for heaven. And yet, alas, how common is this! and, in how great a degree are the best guilty of it! Though we are ashamed to speak so much with our tongues, yet how oft do our hearts say, 'It is best being here;' and how contented are we with an earthly portion! So that I fear, God would displease most of us more to afflict us here, and promise us rest hereafter, than to give us our heart's desire on earth, though he had never made us a promise of heaven: as if the creature without God, were better than God without the creature. Alas, how apt are we, like foolish children, when we are busy at our sports and worldly employments, to forget both our Father and our home! Therefore, is it a hard thing for a rich man to enter into heaven, because it is hard for him to value it more than earth, and not to think he is well already. Come to a man that hath the world at will, and tell him, 'This is not your happiness; you have higher things to look after;' and how little will he regard you! But when affliction comes, it speaks convincingly, and will be heard when preachers cannot. What warm, affectionate, eager thoughts, have we of the world till afflictions cool them, and moderate them! How few and cold would our thoughts of heaven be, how little should we care for coming thither, if God would give us rest on earth! Our thoughts are with God, as Noah's dove was in the ark, kept up to him a little against their inclinations and desire; but when once they can break away, they fly up and down, over all the world, to see if it were possible to find any rest out of God; but when we find that we seek in vain, and that the world is all covered with the waters of instable vanity, and bitter vexation, and that there is no rest for the sole of our foot, or for the foot of our soul; no wonder, then, if we return to the ark again. Many a poor Christian, whom God will not suffer to be drowned in worldliness, nor to take up short of his rest, is sometimes bending his thoughts to thrive in wealth; sometimes he is enticed to some flesh-pleasing sin; sometimes he begins to be lifted up with applause; and sometimes, being in health and prosperity, he hath lost his relish of Christ, and the joys above; till God break in upon his riches, and scatter them abroad, or upon his children, or upon his conscience, or upon the health of his body, and break down his mount, which he thought so strong; and then, when he lieth in Manasseh's fetters, or is fastened to his bed with pining sickness, oh, what an opportunity hath the Spirit to plead with his soul! When the world is worth no-

thing, then heaven is worth something. I leave every Christian to judge by his own experience, whether we do not overlove the world more in prosperity than adversity; and whether we be not lother to come away to God, when we have what the flesh desireth here? How oft are we sitting down on earth, as if we were loth to go any further, till affliction calls to us, as the angel to Elijah, "Up, thou hast a great way to go." How oft have I been ready to think myself at home, till sickness hath roundly told me, I was mistaken! and how apt yet to fall into the same disease, which prevaileth till it be removed by the same cure! If our dear Lord did not put these thorns into our bed, we should sleep out our lives, and lose our glory: therefore doth the Lord sometimes deny us an inheritance on earth with our brethren, because he hath separated us to stand before him, and minister to him, and the Lord himself will be our inheritance, as he hath promised; as it is said of the tribe of Levi. (Deut. x. 8, 9.)

Sect. IV. 3. Consider also, that afflictions be God's most effectual means to keep us from straggling out of the way of our rest. If he had not set a hedge of thorns on the right hand, and another on the left, we should hardly keep the way to heaven. If there be but one gap open, without these thorns, how ready are we to find it, and turn out at it! but when we cannot go astray, but these thorns will prick us, perhaps we will be content to hold the way.[x] When we grow fleshly, and wanton, and worldly, and proud, what a notable means is sickness, or other affliction, to reduce us! It is every Christian, as well as Luther, that may call affliction one of his best schoolmasters. Many a one, as well as David, may say by experience, "Before I was afflicted, I went astray; but now have I (sincerely) kept thy precepts." (Psal. cxix. 76.) As physicians say of bodily destruction, so may we of spiritual, "that peace killeth more than war." Read Nehem. ix. Their case is ours. When we have prosperity, we grow secure and sinful; then God afflicteth us, and we cry for mercy, and purpose reformation; but after we have a little rest, we do evil again, till God take up the rod again, that he may bring us back to his law. (Nehem. ix. 22, 29.) And thus, prosperity, and sinning, and suffering, and re-

[x] Itaque statuamus eos in media et vegeta valetudine ægrotare, qui valetudine abutuntur. Contrà, eos ægrotos bene habere, qui ad Deum ex animo convertuntur, et ab ipsis morbis petunt adversus peccata medicinam.—*Sadeel* in Psalm xxxii. p. 27.

penting, and deliverance, and sinning again, do run all in a round; even as peace breeds contention, and that breeds war, and that, by its bitterness, breeds peace again. Many a thousand poor recovered sinners may cry, 'Oh, healthful sickness! oh, comfortable sorrows! oh, gainful losses! oh, enriching poverty! oh, blessed day that ever I was afflicted!'[a] It is not only the pleasant streams, and the green pastures, but his rod and staff also, that are our comfort; (Psal. xxiii.;) though I know it is the word and Spirit that do the main work; yet certainly the time of suffering is so opportune a season, that the same word will take then, which before was scarce observed. It doth so unbolt the door of the heart, that a minister, or a godly man, may then be heard, and the word may have easier entrance to the affections. Even the threats of judgment will bring an Ahab, or a Nineveh, into their sackcloth and ashes, and make them cry mightily unto God. Something, then, will the feeling of those judgments do.

Sect. V. 4. Consider also, that afflictions are God's most effectual means to make us mend our pace in the way to our rest.[b] They are his rod, and his spur; what sluggard will not awake and stir when he feeleth them? It were well, if mere love would prevail with us, and that we were rather drawn to heaven than driven; but seeing our hearts are so bad that mercy will not do it, it is better to put on with the sharpest scourge, than loiter out our time till the doors are shut. (Matt. xxv. 3, 5, 10.) Oh, what a difference is there betwixt our prayers in health and in sickness; betwixt our prosperity and our adversity repentings! He that before had not a tear to shed, or a groan to utter, now can sob, and sigh, and weep his fill; he that was wont to lie like a block in prayer, and scarce minded what he said to God, now, when affliction presseth him down, how earnestly can he beg! how doth he mingle his prayers and

[a] The Lacedemonian disliked not his friend's limping, because, saith he, it will make you think of virtue every step. And so, perhaps, Jacob remembered the angel. When adversity hath laid us flat on our backs, we cannot choose but look up to heaven.—Dr. Stoughton in his 'Love-sick Spouse,' p. 108. Most Christians can unfold Mr. Herbert's riddle by experience—

"A poor man's rod, when thou dost ride,
Is both a weapon and a guide." (Psalm cxix. 71, 75.)

[b] Marcet sine adversario virtus. Tunc apparet quanta sit, quantum valeat, polleatque, cum quid possit patientia ostendit. Sciat licet idem viris bonis esse faciendum, ut dura et difficilia non reformident, nec de fato querantur. Quicquid accidit, boni consulant, in bonum vertant. Non quid sed quemadmodum feras interest.—*Sen. de Provid.* lib. i. c. 2.

his tears! how doth he purpose and promise reformation! and cry out, what a person he will be, if God will but hear him, and deliver him. Alas! if we did not sometimes feel the spur, what a slow pace would most of us hold towards heaven! and if we did not sometimes smart by affliction, how dead and blockish would be the best men's hearts! Even innocent Adam is liker to forget God in a paradise, than Joseph in a prison, or Job upon a dunghill: even as Solomon is like enough to fall in the midst of pleasure and prosperity, when the most wicked Manasses in his irons may be recovered. As Dr. Stoughton saith, "We are like to children's tops, that will go but little longer than they are whipped." Seeing, then, that our own vile natures do thus require it, why should we be unwilling that God should do us good by so sharp a means? Sure that is the best dealing for us, which surest and soonest doth further us to heaven. I leave thee, Christian, to judge by thy own experience, whether thou dost not go more watchfully, and lively, and speedily, in thy way to rest, in thy sufferings, than thou dost in thy more pleasing and prosperous state. If you go to the vilest sinner on his dying bed, and ask him, 'Will you now drink, and whore, and scorn at the godly, as you were wont to do?' you shall find him quite in another mind. Much more then will affliction work on a gracious soul.

Sect. VI. 5. Consider further, it is but this flesh which is troubled and grieved, for the most part, by affliction:[c] and what reason have we to be so tender of it? In most of our sufferings the soul is free, further than we do wilfully afflict it ourselves. Suppose thou be pinched by poverty, it is thy flesh only that is pinched. If thou have sores or sicknesses, it is but the flesh that they assault; if thou die, it is but that flesh that must rot in the grave. Indeed, it useth also to reach our hearts and souls, when the body suffereth; but that is, because we pore upon our evils, and too much pity and condole the flesh; and so we open the door, and let in the pain to the heart ourselves, which else could have gone no further than the flesh; God smites the flesh, and therefore we will grieve our spirits; and so multiply our grief, as if we had not enough before. O

[c] Not only the carnal, corrupt inclination of the will, but the very misleading, unruly, sensitive appetite is our enemy, and our most desperate enemy, viz. drawing us still to particular inferior good from the supreme: which is the cause, nature, and end, of all sin, as Gibieuf hath proved, lib. ii. de Libert. c. 20. s. 3. p. 424. et passim, viz. quod bonum particulare causa est mali in genere causæ efficientis, finalis et subjectivæ.

if I could but have let my body have suffered alone in all the pining and paining sicknesses which God laid upon it, and not have foolishly added my own self-tormenting fears, and cares, and sorrows, and discontents; but have quieted and comforted my soul in the Lord, my Rock and Rest; I had escaped the far greater part of the afflictions. Why is this flesh so precious in our eyes; why are we so tender of these dusty carcasses; is flesh so excellent a thing; is it not our prison; and what, if it be broken down, is it not our enemy; yea, and the greatest that ever we had; and are we so fearful lest it be overthrown; is it not it that hath so long hampered and clogged our souls, and tied them to earth; and enticed them to forbidden lusts and pleasures; and stolen away our hearts from God; was it not it, that longed for the first forbidden fruit; and must needs be tasting, whatever it cost? And still it is of the same temper; it must be pleased, though God be displeased by it, and ourselves destroyed. It maketh all God's mercies the occasion of our transgressing, and draweth poison from the most excellent objects. If we behold our food, it enticeth to gluttony; if drink, to drunkenness; if apparel, or any thing of worth, to pride; if we look upon beauty, it enticeth to lust; if upon money or possessions, to covetousness. It causeth our very spiritual love to the godly, to degenerate into carnal; and our spiritual zeal, and joy, and other graces; it would make all carnal like itself. What are we beholden to this flesh for, that we are so loth that any thing should ail it? Indeed, we must not wrong it ourselves, for that is forbidden us; nor may we deny it any thing that is fit for a servant, that so it may be useful to us, while we are forced to use it. But if God chastise it for rebelling against him and the Spirit, and it begin to cry and complain under this chastisement, shall we make the suffering greater than it is, and take its part against God? Indeed, the flesh is very near to us, we cannot choose but condole its sufferings, and feel somewhat of that which it feeleth. But is it so near as to be our chiefest part; or can it not be sore, but we must be sorry; or cannot it consume and pine away, but our peace and comfort must consume with it; what, if it be undone, are we therefore undone? or if it perish and be destroyed, do we therefore perish? O fie upon this carnality and unbelief, which are so contradictory to the principles of Christianity! surely, God dealeth the worse with this flesh, because we so overvalue and idolise it. We make it the greatest part of our

care and labour to provide for it, and to satisfy its desires; and we would have God to be of our mind, and to do so too. But as he hath commanded us "to make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the desires or lusts thereof;" (Rom. xiii. 14;) so will he follow the same rule himself in his dealings with us; and will not much stick at the displeasing of the flesh, when it may honour himself, or profit our souls. The flesh is aware of this, and perceives that the word and works of God are much against its desires and delights, and therefore is it also against the word and works of God: [d] it saith of the word, as Ahab of Micaiah, "I hate it, for it doth not speak good concerning me, but evil." (1 Kings xxii. 8.) There is such an enmity betwixt this flesh and God, "that they that are in the flesh cannot please him, and the carnal mind is enmity against him; for it is not subject to his law, nor indeed can be:" so inconsistent is the pleasing of the flesh and the pleasing of God, that he hath concluded, "that to mind the things of the flesh, or to be carnally minded, is death; and if we live after the flesh, we shall die: but if by the Spirit we mortify the deeds of the body, we shall live." (Rom. viii. 4—8, 13.)

So that there is no likelihood that ever God's dealings should be pleasing to the flesh; no more than its works are pleasing to God. Why then, O my soul, dost thou side with this flesh, and say as it saith, and complain as it complaineth? It should be part of thine own work to keep it down, and bring it in subjection; (1 Cor. ix. 26, 27;) and if God do it for thee, shouldst thou be discontented? Hath not the pleasing of it been the cause of almost all thy spiritual sorrows? Why, then, may not the displeasing of it further thy joys? Should not Paul and Silas sing, because their feet were in the stocks, and their flesh yet sore with the last day's scourgings? (Acts xvi.) Why, their spirits were not imprisoned, not scourged! Ah, unworthy soul, is this thy thanks to God for his tenderness of thy good, and for his preferring thee so far before the body! Art thou turned into flesh thyself by thy dwelling a few years in flesh, that thy joys and thy sorrows are most of them so fleshly? (Rom. viii. 12.) Art thou so much a debtor to the flesh, that thou shouldst so much live to it, and value its prosperity? Hath it been so good a friend to thee, and to thy peace; or, is it not

[d] Quis mortalium cui ullum superest hominis vestigium, per diem noctemque titillari velit, et de certo animo corpori operam dare?—*Senec. de Vita Beat.* c. 5.

thy enemy as well as God's? Why dost thou look so sadly on those withered limbs, and on that pining body? Do not so far mistake thyself as to think its joys and thine are all one, or that its prosperity and thine are all one, or that they must needs stand or fall together. (Heb. xii. 13.) When it is rotting and consuming in the grave, then shalt thou be a companion of the perfected spirits of the just; and when those bones are scattered about the churchyard, then shalt thou be praising God in rest. And, in the mean time, hast not thou food of consolation which the flesh knoweth not of; and a joy which this stranger meddleth not with? And do not think that, when thou art turned out of this body, that thou shalt have no habitation: art thou afraid thou shalt wander destitute of a resting place? Is it better resting in flesh than in God? Dost thou not know, that when this house of earth is dissolved, "thou hast a building with God, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens?" (2 Cor. v. 1, 2.) It would, therefore, better become thee earnestly to groan, desiring to be clothed upon with that. (Ver. 3, 4.) Is thy flesh any better than the flesh of Noah was? and yet, though God saved him from the common deluge, he would not save him from common death. Or, is it any better than the flesh of Abraham, Job, or David, or all the saints that ever lived? yet did they all suffer and die. Dost thou think that those souls which are now with Christ do so much pity their rotten or dusty corpse, or lament that their ancient habitation is ruined, and their once comely bodies turned into earth? Oh! what a thing is strangeness and disacquaintance! It maketh us afraid of our dearest friends, and to draw back from the place of our only happiness; so was it with thee towards thy chiefest friends on earth: while thou wast unacquainted with them, thou didst withdraw from their society; but when thou didst once know them thoroughly, thou wouldst have been loth again to be deprived of their fellowship. And even so, though thy strangeness to God and another world do make thee loth to leave this flesh; yet, when thou hast been but one day or hour there, if we may so speak of that eternity, where is neither day nor hour, thou wouldst be full loth to return into this flesh again. Doubtless, when God, for the glory of his Son, did send back the soul of Lazarus into its body, he caused it quite to forget the glory which it had enjoyed, and to leave behind it the remembrance of that happiness, together with the happiness itself; or else it might have made his life a burden to him to think of the blessedness that he was fetched from, and

have made him ready to break down the prison doors of his flesh, that he might return to that happy state again. O, then, impatient soul, murmur not at God's dealings with that body; but let him alone with his work and way. He knows what he doth; but so dost not thou: he seeth the end; but thou seest but the beginning. If it were for want of love to thee, that he did thus chastise thy body, then would he not have dealt so by all his saints. Dost thou think he did not love David and Paul, or Christ himself? or, rather, doth he not chasten because he loveth; and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth? (Heb. xii. 4—8, 10, 11; Matt. vi. 23; Rom. viii. 6—8; 1 Cor. ii. 2, 10—14.) Believe not the flesh's reports of God, nor its commentaries upon his providences. It hath neither will nor skill to interpret them aright: not will; for it is an enemy to them. They are against it, and it is against them. Not skill; for it is darkness: it savoureth only the things of the flesh; but the things of the spirit it cannot understand, because they are spiritually discerned. Never expect then that the flesh should truly expound the meaning of the rod. It will call love, hatred; and say, God is destroying, when he is saving: and murmur, as if he did thee wrong, and used thee hardly, when he is showing thee the greatest mercy of all. Are not the foul steps the way to rest, as well as the fair? yea, are not thy sufferings the most necessary passages of his providence? And though, for the present, they are not joyous, but grievous; yet, in the end, do they bring forth the quiet fruits of righteousness to all those that are exercised thereby. (Heb. xii. 11.) Hast thou not found it so by former experience, when yet this flesh would have persuaded thee otherwise? Believe it then no more, which hath misinformed thee so oft; for, indeed, there is no believing the words of a wicked and ignorant enemy. Ill-will never speaks well; but when malice, viciousness, and ignorance, are combined, what actions can expect a true and fair interpretation? This flesh will call love, anger; and anger, hatred; and chastisements, judgments. It will tell thee, that no man's case is like thine; and if God did love thee, he would never so use thee. (Psalm cxvi. 11.) It will tell thee, that the promises are but deceiving words, and all thy prayers and uprightness are vain. (Psalm lxxiii. 13—15.) If it find thee sitting among the ashes, it will say to thee, as Job's wife, "Dost thou yet retain thine integrity?" (Job ii. 8—10.) Thus will it draw thee to offend against God, and the generation of his children. It is a party,

and a suffering party, and therefore not fit to be the judge. If your child should be the judge when and how oft you should chastise him, and whether your chastisement be a token of fatherly love, you may easily imagine what would be his judgment. If we could once believe God, and judge of his dealings by what he speaks in his word, and by their usefulness to our souls, and reference to our rest, and could stop our ears against all the clamours of the flesh, then we should have a truer judgment of our afflictions.

6. Lastly, consider, God doth seldom give his people so sweet a foretaste of their future rest as in their deep afflictions.[e] He keepeth his most precious cordials for the time of our greatest faintings and dangers. To give them to such men that are well and need them not, is but to cast them away: they are not capable of discerning their working or their worth. A few drops of divine consolation in the midst of a world of pleasure and contents, will be but lost and neglected, as some precious spirits cast into a vessel or river of common waters. The joys of heaven are of unspeakable sweetness; but a man that overflows with earthly delights is scarce capable of tasting their sweetness. They may easilier comfort the most dejected soul, than him that feeleth not any need of comfort, as being full of other comforts already. Even the best of saints do seldom taste of the delights of God, and pure, spiritual, unmixed joys, in the time of their prosperity, as they do in their deepest troubles and distress. God is not so lavish of his choice favours as to bestow them unseasonably. Even to his own will he giveth them at the fittest time, when he knoweth that they are needful, and will be valued, and when he is sure to be thanked for them, and his people rejoiced by them. Especially, when our sufferings are more directly for his cause, then doth he seldom fail of sweetening the bitter cup. Therefore have the martyrs been possessors of the highest joys, and therefore were they in former times so ambitious of martyrdom. I do not think that Paul and Silas did ever sing more joyfully, than when they were sore with scourgings, and were fast in the inner prison, with their feet in the stocks. (Acts xvi. 24, 25.) When did

[e] Cum videris bonos viros acceptosque Deo laborare, sudare, per arduum ascendere; malos autem lascivire, et voluptatibus fluere; cogita, filiorum nos modestia delectari, vernularum licentia; illos disciplinâ tristiori contineri, horum ali audaciam. Idem tibi de Deo liqueat. Bonum virum in deliciis non habet, experitur, indurat, sibi illum præparat.—*Senec. de Provid.* c. 1; John xiv.—xvii. xx.

Christ preach such comforts to his disciples, and leave them his peace, and assure them of his providing them mansions with himself, but when he was ready to leave them, and their hearts to be sorrowful because of his departure? When did he appear among them, and say, "Peace be unto you," but when they were shut up together for fear of the persecuting Jews? When did the room shake where they were, and the Holy Ghost come down upon them, and they lift up their voices in praising God, but when they were imprisoned, convented, and threatened for the name of Christ?[f] (Acts iv. 24, 31.) When did Stephen see heaven opened, but when he was giving up his life for the testimony of Jesus? (Acts vii. 55.) And though we be never put to the suffering of martyrdom, yet God knoweth that in our natural sufferings we need support. Many a Christian that hath waited for Christ, with Simeon in the temple, in duty and holiness all his days, yet never finds him in his arms till he is dying, though his love was fixed in their hearts before; and they that wondered they tasted not of his comforts, have then, when it was needful, received abundance. And, indeed, in time of prosperity, that comfort which we have is so mixed, according to the mixed causes of it, that we can very hardly discern what of it is carnal and what is spiritual. But when all worldly comforts and hopes are gone, then that which is left is most likely to be spiritual. And the Spirit never worketh more sensibly and sweetly than when it worketh alone. Seeing, then, that the time of affliction is the time of our most pure, spiritual, heavenly joy, for the most part, why should a Christian think it so sad a time? Is not that our best estate wherein we have most of God? Why else do we desire to come to heaven? If we look for a heaven of fleshly delights, we shall find ourselves mistaken. Conclude, then, that affliction is not so bad a state for a saint in his way to rest as the flesh would make it. Are we wiser than God? Doth not he know what is good for us better than we? Or is he not as careful of our good as we are of our own? Ah! woe to us if he were not much more; and if he did not love us better than we love either him or ourselves.

Sect. VIII. But let us hear a little what it is the flesh can object.

[f] Spectat militem suum Christus ubicunque pugnantem; et persecutionis causa pro nominis sui honore morienti præmium reddit, quod daturum se in persecutione promisit. Nec minor est martyrii gloria nos publice, et inter multos periisse, cum pereundi causa sit propter Christum perire.—*Cypr.* Ep. 56. (edit. Goulartii) p. 154.

1. 'Oh!' saith one, 'I could bear any other affliction save this: if God had touched me in any thing else, I could have undergone it patiently; but it is my dearest friend, or child, or wife, or my health itself,' [g] &c.

I answer, It seemeth God hath hit the right vein, where thy most inflamed, distempered blood did lie: it is his constant course to pull down men's idols, and take away that which is dearer to them than himself. There it is that his jealousy is kindled; and there it is that thy soul is most endangered. If God should have taken from thee that which thou canst let go for him, and not that which thou canst not; or have afflicted thee where thou canst bear it, and not where thou canst not; thy idol would neither have been discovered nor removed. This would neither have been a sufficient trial to thee, nor a cure; but have confirmed thee in thy soul-deceit and idolatry.

Object. 2. Oh! but, saith another, if God would but deliver me out of it yet, I could be content to bear it: but I have an incurable sickness; or, I am likely to live and die in poverty, or disgrace, or the like distress.

I answer, 1. Is it nothing that he hath promised, it shall work for thy good; [h] (Rom. viii. 28;) and that, with the affliction, he will make a way to escape: that he will be with thee in it; and deliver thee in the fittest manner and season? 2. Is it not enough that thou art sure to be delivered at death, and that with so full an advancing deliverance? Oh! what cursed unbelief doth this discover in our hearts! that we would be more thankful to be turned back again into the stormy, tumultuous sea of the world, than to be safely and speedily landed at our rest; and would be gladder of a few years' inferior mercies at a distance, than to enter upon the eternal inheritance with Christ. Do we call God our chief Good, and heaven our happiness; and yet is it no mercy or deliverance to be taken hence, and put into that possession?

[g] Hear a heathen, and be ashamed: If you will believe me when I open the very secrets of my heart to you, in all things that seem adverse and hard, I am thus composed; I obey not God, but I assent to him. I follow him from my very heart, and not because I must needs do it. I entertain nothing that befalls me sadly, or with a sour countenance.—*Senec.* epist. xlvii. p. 796. And as he, so more fully Pet. Martyr. on Rom. viii. p. 499, rehearseth the strange examples of very many heathens' fortitude in voluntary sufferings, enough to shame faint-hearted Christians.

[h] He that prayeth for the good things of the world which he hath not, doth not seek for that which is good, but for that which only seems to be good, (Clem. Alexand. Strom. lib. vii.) because that is the best for us which God ordereth.

Object. 3. Oh! but, saith another, if my affliction did not disable me for duty, I could bear it; but it maketh me useless, and utterly unprofitable.

Answ. 1. For that duty which tendeth to thy own personal benefit, it doth not disable thee, but is the greatest quickening help that thou canst expect. Thou usest to complain of coldness, and dulness, and worldliness, and security: if affliction will not help thee against all these, by warning, quickening, rousing thy spirit, I know not what will. Surely thou wilt repent thoroughly, and pray fervently, and mind God and heaven more seriously, either now or never. 2. And for duty to others, and for thy service to the church, it is not thy duty when God doth disable thee. He may call thee out of the vineyard in this respect, even before he call thee by death. If he lay thee in the grave, and put others in thy place to do the service, is this any wrong to thee, or doth it beseem thee to repine at it? Why so, if he call thee out before thy death, and let thee stand by, and set others to do the work in thy stead, shouldst thou not be as well content? Must God do all the work by thee? Hath he not many others as dear to him, and as fit for the employment? But, alas! what deceitfulness lieth in these hearts! When we have time, and health, and opportunity, to work, then we loiter, and do our Master but very little service; but when he layeth affliction upon us, then we complain that he disableth us for his work, and yet perhaps we are still negligent in that part of the work which we can do: so, when we are in health and prosperity, we forget the public, and are careless of other men's miseries and wants, and mind almost nothing but ourselves. But when God afflicteth us, though he excite us more to duty for ourselves, yet we complain that he disableth us for our duty to others; as if, on the sudden, we were grown so charitable that we regard other men's souls far more than our own. But is not the hand of the flesh, in all this dissimulation, secretly thus pleading its own cause? What pride of heart is this, to think that other men cannot do the work as well as we; or, that God cannot see to his church, and provide for his people, without us?

Object. 4. Oh! but, saith another, it is the godly that are my afflicters: they disclaim me, and will scarcely look at me; they censure me, and backbite me, and slander me,[1] and look upon

[1] Grave est, inquis, injuriam sustinere: Mentiris. Quis enim injuriam non potest ferre, qui potest iram? Adjice nunc, quod id agis, ut et iram feras et

me with a disdainful eye. If it were ungodly men, I could bear it easily: I look for no better at their hands: but when those that were my delight, and that I looked for daily comfort and refreshing from; when these shall be my grief, and as thorns in my sides; who can bear it?

Answ. 1. Whoever is the instrument, the affliction is from God, and the provoking cause from thyself; and were it not fitter then that thou look more to God and thyself? 2. Dost thou not know that the best men are still sinful in part, and that their hearts are naturally deceitful, and desperately wicked, as well as others? And this being but imperfectly cured, so far as they are fleshly, the fruits of the flesh will appear in them; which are, strife, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, seditions, heresies, envyings, &c. (Gal. v. 19—21.) So far, the best is a brier, and the most upright of them sharper than a thorny hedge: learn, therefore, a better use from the prophet: "Trust not too much in a friend, nor put confidence in a guide; keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom, &c. But look rather for the Lord, and wait for the God of thy salvation." (Micah vii. 4—7.) It is likely thou hast given that love and trust to saints, which were due only to God, or which thou hast denied him, and then no wonder if he chastise thee by them. If we would use our friends as friends, God would make them our helps and comforts; but when once we make them our gods, by excessive love, delight, and trust, then he suffers them to prove Satans to us, and to be our accusers and tormentors. It is more safe to me to have any creature a Satan than a God; to be tormented by them, than to idolize them.[k] Or perhaps the observation of the excellency of grace hath made thee forget the vileness of nature; and therefore God will have thee take notice of both. Many are tender of giving too much to the dead saints, that yet give too much to the living without scruple. Till thou hast learned to suffer from a saint, as well as from the wicked, and to be abused by the godly as well as the ungodly,

injuriam. Quare fers ægri rabiem et phrenetici verba? Nempe quia videntur nescire quid faciunt. Quid interest, quo quisque vitio fiat imprudens?—*Seneca de Ira*, lib. iii. c. 26.

[k] Si amici omnes te desererent, memento, solus non est cui Christus in fuga comes. Solus non est qui templum Dei servans, ubicumque fuerit, sine Deo non est; ut Cypr. Epist. lvi. p. (mihi) 154; John xiv. 27; xiii. 34, 35, and xv. 12, 17; Matt. xxii. 37, 39; 1 John iii. 11, 14, 17, 18, 23, and iv. 7, 11, 12, 20, 21, &c.; Acts xv. 38, 39; 2 Chron. xvi. 10, and xvi. 17; Psalm xli. 8, 9. Read Psalm lv. 12—14.

never look to live a contented or comfortable life, nor ever think thou hast truly learned the art of suffering. Do not think that I vilify the saints too much in so saying: I confess, it is a pity that saints should suffer from saints; and it is quite contrary to their holy nature, and their Master's laws, who hath left them his peace, and made love to be the character of his disciples, and to be the first and great and new commandment; and I know that there is much difference between them and the world in this point; but yet, as I said, they are saints but in part, and therefore Paul and Barnabas may so fall out, as to part asunder, and upright Asa may imprison the prophet, call it persecution or what you please: Joseph's brethren, that cast him into a pit, and sold him to strangers for a slave, I hope were not all ungodly; Job's wife and friends were sad comforters; David's enemy was his familiar friend, with whom he had taken sweet counsel, and they had gone up together to the house of God. And know also that thy own nature is as bad as theirs, and thou art as likely thyself to be a grief to others. Can such ulcerous, leperous sinners, as the best are, live together, and not infect and molest each other with the smell of their sores?[1] Why, if thou be a Christian, thou art a daily trouble to thyself, and art molested more with thy own corruptions than with any man's else: and dost thou take it so heinously to be molested with the frailties of others, when thou canst not forbear doing more against thyself? For my part, for all our graces, I rather admire at that wisdom and goodness of God, that maintains the order and union we have amongst us; and that he suffereth us not to be still one another's executioners, and to lay violent hands on ourselves and each other. I dare not think that there is no one gracious that hath laboured to destroy others that were so in these late dissensions. Sirs, you do not half know yet the mortal wickedness

[1] Iniquus est qui commune vitium singulis objicit. Non est Æthiopis inter suos insignitus color. Nihil in uno judicabis notabile, aut fœdum, quod genti suæ publicum est. Quanto in his justior venia est, quæ per totum genus humanum vulgata sunt? Omnes inconsulti et improvidi sumus, omnes incerti, queruli, ambitiosi. Quid lenioribus verbis ulcus publicum abscondo? Omnes mali sumus. Quicquid itaque in alio reprehenditur, id unusquisque in suo sinu invenit. Mali inter malos vivimus. Una res nos facere potest quietos, mutuæ facilitatis conventio.—*Senec. de Ira*, lib. iii. c. 26. Multum temporis ultio absumit. Multis se injuriis objicit, dum una dolet. Diutius irascimur omnes quam lædimur. Quanto melius est, abire in diversum, nec vitia vitiis componere? Numquis satis constare sibi videatur, si mulam calcibus repetat, et canem morsu?—*Senec.* ibid. c. 27.

of depraved nature. If the best were not more beholden to the grace of God without them, than to the habitual grace within them, you should soon see "that men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie; to be put in the balance, they are lighter than vanity itself." (Psal. lxii. 7—9.) "For what is man, that he should be clean; and he that is born of a woman, that he should be righteous? Behold he putteth no trust in his saints, and the heavens are not clean in his sight: how much more abominable and filthy is man, that drinketh up iniquity like water!" (Job xv. 14—16.)

Object. 5. Oh, but if I had that consolation which you say God reserveth for our suffering times, I should suffer more contentedly; but I do not perceive any such thing.

Answ. 1. The more you suffer for righteousness' sake, the more of this blessing you may expect; and the more you suffer for your own evil doing, the longer you must look to stay till that sweetness come.[m] When we have by our folly provoked God to chastise us, shall we presently look that he should fill us with comfort? That were, as Mr. Paul Bayn saith, "to make affliction to be no affliction." What good would the bitterness do us if it be presently drowned in that sweetness? It is well in such sufferings if you have but supporting grace, and your sufferings sanctified to work out your sin, and bring you to God.

2. Do you not neglect or resist the comforts which you desire? God hath filled precepts, and promises, and other of his providences, with matter of comfort; if you will overlook all these, and make nothing of them, and pore all upon your sufferings, and observe one cross more than a thousand mercies, who maketh you uncomfortable but yourselves? If you resolve that you will not be comfortable as long as any thing aileth your flesh, you may stay till death before you have comfort.

3. Have your afflictions wrought kindly with you, and fitted you for comfort?[n] Have they humbled you, and brought you to a faithful confession and reformation of your beloved sins; and made you set close to your neglected duties; and weaned your hearts from their former idols; and brought them unfeignedly to take God for their portion and their rest? If this be not

[m] Nemo illic (viz. inter maleficos) Christianus nisi plane tantum Christianus. Aut si et aliud, jam non Christianus.—*Tert. Apol.* c. 44.

[n] We lengthen our miseries by shortening of our duties; and the Lord keeps aloof from us, because we lie aloof from him.—*Mr. Vines on Numb.* xiv. 24. p. 23.

done, how can you expect comfort? Should God bind up the sore while it festereth at the bottom? It is not mere suffering that prepares you for comfort, but the success and fruit of suffering upon your hearts.

I shall say no more on this subject of afflictions, because so many have written on it already, among which I desire you especially to read Mr. Bayn's letters, and Mr. Hughes' 'Dry Rod Blooming and Fruit-bearing,' and Young's 'Counterpoison.'

CHAP. XIII.

USE V.—*An Exhortation to those that have got Assurance of this Rest, or Title to it, that they would do all that they possibly can to help others to it also.*

SECT. I. Hath God set before us such a glorious prize as this everlasting rest of the saints is, and hath he made man capable of such an inconceivable happiness? Why then do not all the children of this kingdom bestir themselves more to help others to the enjoyment of it? Alas, how little are poor souls about us beholden to the most of us! We see the glory of the kingdom, and they do not; we see the misery and torment of those that miss of it, and they do not; we see them wandering quite out of the way, and know if they hold on they can never come there, and they discern not this themselves.* And yet we will not set upon them seriously, and show them their danger and error, and help to bring them into the way that they may live. Alas, how few Christians are there to be found that live as men that are made to do good, and that set themselves with all their might to the saving of souls! No thanks to us if heaven be not empty, and if the souls of our brethren perish not for ever.

But because this is a duty which so many neglect, and so few are convinced that God doth expect it at their hands, and yet a duty of so high a concernment to the glory of God, and the happiness of men, I will speak of it somewhat the more largely, and show you, 1. Wherein it doth consist, and how to be done. 2. What is the cause that it is so neglected. 3. And then give

* Read Mr. Al. Lapthorn's book called 'Spiritual Alms.'

some considerations, to persuade you to the performance of it, and others to the bearing of it. 4. And lastly, apply this more particularly to some persons whom it doth nearly concern. Of all these in order.

Sect. II. 1. I would have you, therefore, well understand what is this work which I am persuading you to: know, then, on the negative, 1. It is not to invade the office of the ministry, and every man to turn a public preacher: I would not have you go beyond the bounds of your callings. We see, by daily experience, what fruits those men's teachings do bring forth, who run uncalled and thrust themselves into the place of public teachers, thinking themselves the fittest for the work, in the pride of their hearts, while they had need to be taught the very first principles of religion. How little doth God bless the labours of these self-conceited intruders! [p]

Neither do I persuade you to a zealous promoting of factions and parties, and venting of uncertain opinions, which men's salvation is little concerned in. Alas, what advantage hath the devil lately got in the church by this imposture! The time that should be employed in drawing men's souls from sin to Christ, is employed in drawing them to opinions and parties. When men are fallen in love with their own conceits, [q] and proudly think themselves the wisest, how diligently do they labour to get them followers! as if to make a man a proselyte to their opinions, were as happy a work as to convert him to Christ; and when they fall among the lighter, ignorant, unsounder sort of professors, whose religion is all in their brain, and on their tongues, they seldom fail of their desired success. These men shall shortly know, that to bring a man to the knowledge and love of Christ, is another kind of work, than to bring him to be baptised again; or to be of such a church, or such a side. [r] Unhappy are the souls that are taken in their snare!

[p] Si quis dicat quia infirmi hi sunt ergo tolerandi; resp. cum Augustino. Non negligendum esse Christum propter infirmum, cum infirmus diligendus sit propter Christum; danda potius est opera ut proficiant et firmiores evadant in Domino; muniendi sunt ne seducantur; monendi nequis prætextu infirmitatis superbiæ carnis indulgeat; denique et ecclesiæ interest, ut infirmi bene sentiant de suis doctoribus et pastoribus.—*Boger.* in Epist ante Annot. in Grotii Piet.

[q] Beatus qui venas susurri divini percipit in silentio; quam bonum utique est homini Dominum expectare?—Unum cave; ne abundare incipias in sensu tuo, et velis plus sapere quam oportet sapere; ne forte dum lucem sectaris, impingas in tenebras; illudente tibi dæmonio meridiano.—*Bern.* Serm. 90.

[r] Object. But why then do the most faithful, prudent, skilful members of the church turn to that side? Answ. Who is it that thus speaks, that may

who, when they have spent their lives in studying and contending for the circumstantials of religion, which should have been spent in studying and loving the Lord Jesus, do in the end, reap an empty harvest suitable to their empty profession.

3. Nor do I persuade you to speak against men's faults behind their backs, and be silent before their faces, as the common custom of the world is. To tell other men of their faults, tendeth little to their reformation, if they hear it not themselves. To whisper out men's faults to others, as it cometh not from love, or from any honest principle, so usually doth it produce no good effect; for if the party hear not of it, it cannot better him; if he do, he will take it but as the reproach of an enemy, tending to disgrace him, and not as the faithful counsel of a friend, tending to recover him; and as that which is spoken to make him odious, and not to make him virtuous. It tendeth not to provoke to godliness, but to raise contention; for "a whisperer separateth the chiefest friends;" (Prov. xvi. 28;) and how few shall we find that make conscience of this horrible sin, or that will confess it, and bewail it, when they are reprehended for it! especially if men are speaking of their enemies, or those that have wronged them, or whom they suppose to have wronged them; or if it be of one that eclipseth their glory, (Gen. xxxi. 1; Psal. xli. 7,) or that standeth in the way of their gain or esteem; or if it be one that differeth from them in judgment; or of one that is commonly spoken against by others; who is it that maketh any conscience of backbiting such as these? And you shall ever observe, that the forwarder they are to backbiting, the more backward always to faithful admonishing; and none speak less of a man's faults to his face for his reformation, than those that speak most of them behind his back, to his

not answer himself? that they are to be esteemed neither prudent, nor faithful, nor skilful, whom heresies were able to change. And is that a wonder, that an approved man should after fall back? Saul, who was better than others, was after by envy overturned. David, a good man after God's own heart, was after guilty of adultery and murder. Solomon, who was furnished with all grace and wisdom from God, was by women enticed to idolatry. It was reserved only for the Son of God to be without sin. What, therefore, if a bishop, a deacon, a widow, a virgin, a teacher, a martyr, shall fall from the rule? Shall we, therefore, judge heresies to be truth? Do we judge of our belief by persons, or of persons by their belief? No man is a wise man but the faithful; and no man is greater than others, but a Christian; and no man is a Christian but he that persevereth to the end. Thou, as a man, knowest men's outside, and judgest what thou seest; and seest so far as thou hast eyes, &c.; but God's eyes are high; the Lord knoweth who are his.—*Tertul. de Præscript.* c. 3.

defamation. If ill-will or envy lie at the heart, it maketh them cast forth disgracing speeches as oft as they can meet with such as themselves, who will hear and entertain them. Even as a corrupt humour in the stomach provoketh a man to vomit up all that he taketh, while itself remaineth, and continueth the disease. (1 Sam. xxii. 9; Dan. vi. 3; Rom. i. 29, 30; John vii. 51.) It is Chrysostom's similitude.[s]

So far am I from persuading, therefore, to this preposterous course, that I would advise you to oppose it wherever you meet with it. See that you never hear a man speaking against his neighbour behind his back, without some special cause or call, but presently rebuke him; ask him, whether he hath spoke those things in a way of love to his face: if he have not, ask him, how he dare to pervert God's prescribed order, who commandeth to rebuke our neighbour plainly, and to tell him his fault first in private, and then before witness, till he see whether he will be won or not; (Lev. xix. 17; Matt. xviii. 15, 17;) and how he dare do as he would not be done by.

Sect. III. The duty therefore that I would press you to, is of another nature, and it consisteth in these things following. 1. That you get your hearts affected with the misery of your brethren's souls; be compassionate towards them; yearn after their recovery to salvation: if you did earnestly long after their conversion, and your hearts were fully set to do them good, it would set you a work, and God would usually bless it.[t]

2. Take all opportunities that you possibly can, to confer with them privately about their states, and to instruct and help them to the attaining of salvation. And lest you should not know how to manage this work, let me tell you more par-

[s] Notandum est quod arguendi verbum exigit delicti explicationem et declarationem. Non dicit, Vade et vitupera illum, sed (Argue).—*Musc.* in Matt. xviii. p. (mihi) 420. Most of us are very ready to snarl at the faults that are in another man's house, or, at least, secretly in our hearts to censure them; but they that will well instruct and order their own families, are very few.—*Musc.* in Matt. vii. tom. i. p. 154; Prov. xxv. 23.

[t] There is more knowledge and diligence requisite to reduce an erroneous man to the truth, than a sinner to righteousness. For you may easily convince a sinner, because he cannot deny his sin; but it is a most difficult thing to convince the erroneous, because he will not acknowledge his error, nor endure to be taught, as we see in this our age. For here are many hinderances, to which is added a bitterness of spirit, which, while it continueth, will stop up the passage against all teaching. For who will suffer himself to be taught of that man whom he believes not, and whom he hateth and contemneth in his heart?—*Musc.* in Matt. vii. p. 156. See next in him directions how to deal with the erroneous.

ticularly what you are herein to do. 1. If it be an ignorant, carnal person that you have to deal with, who is an utter stranger to the mysteries of religion, and to the work of regeneration on his own soul, the first thing you have to do is, to acquaint him with these doctrines; labour to make him understand wherein man's chief happiness doth consist, and how far he was once possessed of it, and what law and covenant God then made with him, and how he broke it, and what penalty he incurred, and what misery he brought himself into thereby; teach him what need men had of a Redeemer, and how Christ in mercy did interpose and bear the penalty, and what covenant now he hath made with man, and on what terms only salvation is now to be attained, and what course Christ taketh to draw men to himself, and what are the riches and privileges that believers have in him.

If, when he understandeth these things, he be not moved by them, or if you find that the stop lieth in his will and affections, and in the hardness of his heart, and in the interest that the flesh and the world have got in him, then show him the excellency of the glory which he neglecteth, and the intolerableness of the loss of it, and the extremity and eternity of the torments of the damned, and how certainly they must endure them, and how just it is for their wilful refusals of grace, and how heinous a sin it is to reject such free and abundant mercy, and to tread underfoot the blood of the covenant; show him the certainty, nearness, and terrors of death and judgment, and the vanity of all things below which now he is taken up with, and how little they will bestead him in that time of his extremity; show him that by nature he himself is a child of wrath, an enemy to God, and by actual sin much more; show him the vile and heinous nature of sin, the absolute necessity he standeth in of a Saviour, the freeness of the promise, the fulness of Christ, the sufficiency of his satisfaction, his readiness to receive all that are willing to be his; the authority and dominion which he hath purchased over us; show him also the absolute necessity of regeneration, faith, and holiness of life, how impossible it is to have salvation by Christ without these, and what they are, and the true nature of them. If, when he understandeth all this, you find his soul enthralled in presumption and false hopes, persuading himself that he is a true believer, and pardoned, and reconciled, and shall be saved by Christ; and all this upon false grounds, or merely because he would have it so, which is a common case; then

urge him hard to examine his state; show him the necessity of trying, the danger of being deceived, the commonness and easiness of mistaking, through the deceitfulness of the heart, the extreme madness of putting it to a blind adventure, or of resting in negligent or wilful uncertainty; help him in trying himself; produce some undeniable evidences from Scripture; ask him, whether these be in him or not? whether ever he found such workings or dispositions in his heart? urge him to a rational answer; do not leave him till you have convinced him of his misery, and then seasonably and wisely show him the remedy. If he produce some common gifts, or duties, or work, know to what end he doth produce them; if to join with Christ in composing him a righteousness, show him how vain and destructive they are; if it be by way of evidence to prove his title to Christ, show him how far a common work may reach, and wherein the life of Christianity doth consist, and how far he must go further, if he will be Christ's disciple. In the mean time, that he be not discouraged with hearing of so high a measure, show him the way by which he must attain it; be sure to draw him to the use of all means; set him a hearing and reading of the word, calling upon God, accompanying the godly; persuade him to leave his actual sin, and to get out of all ways of temptation, especially to forsake ungodly company, and to wait patiently on God in the use of means; and show him the strong hopes that in so doing he may have of a blessing, this being the way that God will be found in.

If you perceive him possessed with any prejudicate conceits against the godly, and the way of holiness, show him their falsehood, and with wisdom and meekness answer his objections.

If he be addicted to delay the duties he is convinced of, or laziness and stupidity to endanger his soul, then lay it on the more powerfully, and set home upon his heart the most piercing considerations, and labour to fasten them as thorns in his conscience, that he may find no ease or rest till he change his state.

Sect. IV. But because in all works the manner of doing them is of greatest moment, and the right performance doth much further the success,[u] I will here adjoin a few directions, which you must be sure to observe in this work of exhortation, for it is not every advice that useth to succeed, nor any manner of

[u] Sicut scopus medicorum est sanitas corporum; ita Christianorum sanitas animarum.—*Musc.* in Matt. vii. tom. i. p. 155.

doing it that will serve the turn. Observe, therefore, these rules:

1. Set upon the work sincerely, and with right intentions. Let thy ends be the glory of God in the party's salvation. Do it not to get a name or esteem to thyself, or to bring men to depend upon thee, or to get thee followers; do not, as many carnal parents and masters will do, viz., rebuke their children and servants for those sins that displease them, and are against their profit, or their humours: as, disobedience, unthriftiness, unmannerliness, &c., and labour much to reform them in these, but never seek in the right way that God hath appointed to save their souls; but be sure the main end be to recover them from misery, and bring them into the way of eternal rest. We have many reprovers, but the manner shows too plainly that there are few sincere. Pride bids men reprove others, to manifest a high estimation of themselves; and they obey; and proudly, censoriously, and contemptuously they do it. Passion bids them reprove, and passionately they do it. But it is those that do it in compassion and tender love to men's souls, who do it in obedience to Christ, the most tender, compassionate lover of souls, and who imitate him in their measure and place, who came to seek and to save that which was lost.

Sect. V. 2. Do it speedily: as you would not have them delay their returning, so do not you delay to seek their return. You are purposing long to speak to such an ignorant neighbour, and to deal with such a scandalous sinner, and yet you have never done it. Alas! he runs on the score all this while; he goes deeper in debt; wrath is heaping up; sin taketh rooting; custom doth more fasten him; engagements to sin grow stronger and more numerous; conscience grows seared; the heart grows hardened: while you delay, the devil rules and rejoiceth; Christ is shut out; the Spirit is repulsed; God is daily dishonoured, his law is violated, he is without a servant, and that service from him which he should have; the soul continues in a doleful state; time runs on; the day of visitation hasteth away; death and judgment are even at the door; and what, if the man die and miss of heaven, while you are purposing to teach him and help him to it? what, if he drop into hell while you are purposing to prevent it? If in case of his bodily distress, you must not bid him go, and come again to-morrow, when you have it by you, and he is in want, (Prov. iii. 27, 28,) how much less may you delay the succour of his soul! If once death

snatch him away, he is then out of the reach of your cha
That physician is no better than a murderer, that negliger
delayeth till his patient be dead or past cure. Delay in dut
a great degree of disobedience, though you afterwards perfo
it: it shows an ill heart, that is indisposed to the work. Oh, h
many a poor sinner perisheth, or grows rooted, and next to
curable in sin, while we are proposing to seek their recover
Opportunities last not always. When thou hearest that
sinner is dead, or removed, or grown obstinate, will not co
science say to thee, 'How knowest thou but thou mightest ha
prevented the damnation of a soul?' Lay by thy excuses the
and all lesser business, and obey God's command, "Exho
one another daily, while it is called to-day, lest any one
hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." (Heb. iii. 13.)

Sect. VI. 3. Let thy exhortation proceed from compassi
and love, and let the manner of it clearly show the person th
dealest with, that it hence proceedeth.[x] It is not jeerin
or scorning, or reproaching a man for his faults, that is a like
way to work his reformation; nor is it the right way to conve
him to God, to rail at him, and vilify him with words of di
grace. Men will take them for their enemies that thus de
with them: and the words of an enemy are little persuadin
Lay by your passion, therefore, and take up compassion, and g
to poor sinners with tears in your eyes, that they may see yo
indeed believe them to be miserable, and that you do unfeigned
ly pity their case; deal with them with earnest, humble en
treatings; let them see that your very bowels do yearn ove
them, and that it is the very desire of your hearts to do then

[x] That we must deal gently with sinners, you may discern in the nature o
true righteousness, which hath compassion in it, and not disdain. Of whic
we have no such clear and potent example as in Christ, who dealt with sin
ners so very gently, that the Pharisees called him, "a companion of sinners."
—*Muse.* in Matt. vii. p. 156. Est enim generosus hominis animus magisqu
ducitur quam trahitur; ex quo in promptu est cognoscere, qua sint alii man
suetudine tractandi, si quidem salutem eorum ex animo quæramus.—*Muse*
ibid. He that will instruct an erroneous man, must above all see that h
win his heart by much mildness, and by good turns; and when his heart i
appeased, he will begin to lend his ear to be taught; which if it be not done
all your labour to open his understanding by disputation is in vain; for h
will not only not hear you, but what he doth hear he will interpret the wrong
way, according to the corruption of his own heart. For if disputations would
serve to cure the erroneous, and to their perceiving of the truth, who can deny
but there is so much writing long ago of most points, that no man could now
be ignorant of the truth? But the reason that most are in error, is, because
that in bitterness of their hearts they either weigh not what is said and writ-
ten, or take them in the wrong way.—*Muse.* in Matt. vii. p. 157.

good; let them perceive that you have no other end but the procuring of their everlasting happiness; and that it is your sense of their danger, and your love to their souls, that forced you to speak, even because you knew the terrors of the Lord, and for fear lest you should see them in eternal torments; say to them, 'Why, friend, you know it is no advantage of my own that I seek. The way to please you, and to keep your friendship, were to soothe you in your way, or to speak well of you, or to let you alone, but love will not suffer me to see you perish, and be silent; I seek nothing at your hands, but that which is necessary to your own happiness; it is yourself that will have the gain and comfort if you come in to Christ,' &c. If men would thus go to every ignorant, wicked neighbour they have, and thus deal with them, oh, what blessed fruit should we quickly see! I am ashamed to hear some lazy, hypocritical wretches, to revile their poor, ignorant neighbours, and separate from their company and communion, and proudly to judge them unfit for their society, before ever they once tried with them this compassionate exhortation. Oh, you little know what a prevailing course this were like to prove! and how few of the vilest drunkards or swearers would prove so obstinate, as wholly to reject or despise the exhortations of love! I know it must be God that must change men's hearts, but I know also that God worketh by means, and when he meaneth to prevail with men, he usually fitteth the means accordingly, and stirreth up men to plead with them in a prevailing way, and so setteth in with his grace, and maketh it successful. Certainly, those that have tried, can tell you by experience, that there is no way so prevailing with men as the way of compassion and love. So much of these as they discern in your exhortation, usually, so much doth it succeed with their heart; and, therefore, I beseech those that are faithful to practise this course. Alas! we see the most godly people among us, or at least those that would seem most godly, cannot bear a reproof that comes not in meekness and in love; if there be the least bitterness of passion, or relish of disgrace in it, they are ready to spit it out in your face; yea, if you do not so sugar your reproof with fair words, that it be liker to flattery than plain dealing, or liker a commendation than a reproof, they cannot well digest it, but their heart will rise up against you, instead of a thankful submission and a reformation; if it savour not liker to food than physic, it will hardly down with them, or they will soon vomit it up. What should we flatter one another

for? It is now no time to flatter professors, when their have broke forth more shamefully than ever in the world; my part, the most of them that I have been acquainted with are such. I meet not with one of a multitude that seem most godly, but this is their very case; such heinous pride maineth in the best. And do you expect then, that p ignorant, carnal sinners, should take that well that profes cannot endure; and should drink in those bitter reproofs a pleasant draught, which you can scarcely pour into professor a drench? Can you look that the same dealing should be sav to them, which you find to be exasperating and distempering yourselves? Oh, that it were not too evident that the Phari is yet alive in the breasts of many thousands, that seem m religious, even in this one point of bearing plain and sharp proof! They bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, a lay them on men's shoulders, but they themselves will not m them with one of their fingers. (Matt. xxiii. 4.) So far they from doing, in this, as they would be done by.

Sect. VII. 4. Another direction I would give you, is th Do it with all possible plainness and faithfulness;[y] do not da with men, and hide from them their misery or danger, or a part of it; do not make their sins less than they are, nor spe of them in an extenuating language; do not encourage them a false hope or faith, any more than you would discourage t sound hopes of the righteous. If you see his case dangero tell him plainly of it: 'Neighbour, I am afraid God hath r yet renewed your soul, and that it is yet a stranger to the gr work of regeneration and sanctification; I doubt you are r yet recovered from the power of Satan to God, nor brought c of the state of wrath, which you were born in, and have liv in; I doubt you have not chosen Christ above all, nor set yc heart upon him, nor unfeignedly taken him for your soverei Lord. If you had, sure you durst not so easily disobey hir you could not so neglect him and his worship in your fam and in public; you could not so eagerly follow the world, a talk of almost nothing but the things of this world, wh Christ is seldom mentioned or sought after by you. If you we

[y] Charity hath its sharpness or austerity too, as appears in Christ himse For it was hard which he said to Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan; t thou savourest not the things of God, but of men." But this was only the and to those, where he knew austerity was profitable and necessary.—*Mu* in Matt. vii. p. 156.

in Christ, you would be a new creature; old things would be passed away, and all things would become new; you would have new thoughts, and new talk, and new company, and new endeavours, and a new conversation: certainly, without these you can never be saved. You may think otherwise, and hope better as long as you will, but your hopes will deceive you, and perish with you. Alas! it is not as you will, nor as I will, who shall be saved, but it is as God will; and God hath told us, "that without holiness none shall see him;" and "except we be born again, we cannot enter into his kingdom;" and "that all that would not have Christ reign over them, shall be brought forth and destroyed before him." (Heb. xii. 14; John iii. 3; Luke xix. 27.) Oh! therefore look to your state in time. Thus must you deal roundly and faithfully with men, if ever you intend to do them good; it is not hovering at a distance in a general discourse, that will serve the turn; it is not in curing men's souls, as in curing their bodies, where they must not know their danger, lest it sadden them, and hinder the cure. They are here agents in their own cure, and if they know not their misery, they will never bewail it, nor know how much need they have of a Saviour. If they know not the worst, they will not labour to prevent it, but will sit still, or loiter till they drop into perdition, and will trifle out their time in delays till it be too late; and, therefore, speak to men, as Christ to the Pharisees, till they knew that he meant them: deal plainly, or you do but deceive and destroy them.

Sect. VIII. 5. And as you must do it plainly, so also, seriously, zealously, and effectually. The exceeding stupidity and deadness of men's hearts is such, that no other dealing will ordinarily work. You must call loud to awaken a man in a swoon or lethargy. If you speak to the common sort of men of the evil of their sin, of their need of Christ, of the danger of their souls, and of the necessity of regeneration, they will wearily and unwillingly give you the hearing, and put off all with a sigh, or a few good wishes, and say, 'God forgive us, we are all sinners,' and there is an end.[z] If ever you will do them good,

[z] How zealously should we deal with open wicked ones, when Paul did so openly reprehend even Peter himself for dissimulation, and leave his sin and the reproof on sacred record! I know what Jerome saith of this against Augustine, as all that know their works know. But that Augustine had the better cause, not only the former exposition of Ambros. in Gal. ii., and Cyprian. Epist. 71. ad Quintum, Tert. i. de Præscript. c. 23. et cont. Marcion. lib. iv. c. 3. &c. show, but the plain text itself; as even Suarez himself is forced to

therefore, you must sharpen your exhortation, and set it home, and follow it with their hearts, till you have roused them up, and made them begin to look about them. Let them know that thou speakest no tto them of indifferent things, nor about children's games, or worldlings' vanities, or matters of a few days' or years' continuance, nor yet about matters of uncertainty, which perhaps may never come to pass; but it is about the saving and damning of their souls and bodies, and whether they shall be blessed with Christ or tormented with devils, and that for ever and ever without any change; it is how to stand before God in judgment, and what answer to give, and how they are like to speed: and this judgment and eternal state they shall very shortly see, they are almost at it, yet a few more nights and days, and they shall presently be at that last day; a few more breaths they have to breathe, and they shall breathe out their last, and then as certainly shall they see that mighty change, as the heaven is over their heads, and the earth under their feet. O labour to make men know that it is mad jesting about salvation or damnation, and that heaven and hell be not matters to be played with, or passed over with a few careless thoughts. It is most certain that one of these days thou shalt be either in everlasting, unchangeable joy or torments; and doth it not awake thee? Is there so few that find the way of life, so many that go the way of death? Is it so hard to escape, so easy to miscarry? and that while we fear nothing but think all is well; and yet you sit still and trifle; why what do you mean? What do you think on? The world is passing away; its pleasures are fading; its honours are leaving you; its profits will prove unprofitable to you; heaven or hell are a little before you; God is just and jealous; his threatenings are true; the great day of his judgement will be terrible; your time runs on; your lives are uncertain; you are far behindhand; you have loitered long; your case is dangerous; your souls are far gone in sin; you are strange to God; you are hardened in evil customs; you have no assurance of pardon to show; if you die tomorrow, how unready are you, and with what terror will your souls go out of your bodies! and do you yet loiter for all this? why, consider with yourselves: God standeth all this while

confess, and most of the moderns with him, as he there saith, though in partiality to Peter he maketh a long stir to excuse him, even from all fault: which I dare say Peter would not do himself, if he were to speak his own case. —See *Suarez de Legibus*, lib. ix. *de Lege Divin. posit.* c. xx. pp. 792—794, &c.

waiting your leisure: his patience beareth, his justice forbeareth; his mercy entreateth you; Christ standeth offering you his blood and his merits; you may have him freely, and life with him; the Spirit is persuading you; conscience is accusing and urging you; ministers are praying for you, and calling upon you; Satan stands waiting, when justice shall cut off your lives, that he may have you: this is your time: now or never. What! had you rather lose heaven than your profits or pleasures? Had you rather burn in hell than repent on earth? Had you rather howl and roar there, than pray day and night for mercy here? Or to have devils your tormentors, than to have Christ your governor? Will you renounce your part in God and glory, rather than renounce your cursed sins? Do you think a holy life too much for heaven, or too dear a course to prevent an endless misery? O friends, what do you think of these things? God hath made you men, and endued you with reason, do you renounce your reason where you should chiefly use it? In this manner you must deal roundly and seriously with men. Alas! it is not a few dull words, between jest and earnest, between sleep and waking, as it were, that will waken an ignorant, dead-hearted sinner. When a dull hearer and a dull speaker meet together, a dead heart and a dead exhortation, it is far unlike to have a lively effect. If a man fall down in a swoon, you will not stand trifling with him, but lay hands on him presently, and snatch him up, and rub him, and call aloud to him; if a house be on fire, you will not in a cold affected strain go tell your neighbour of it, nor go make an oration of the nature and danger of fire; but you will run out, and cry, 'Fire, fire.' Matters of moment must be seriously dealt with. To tell a man of his sins as softly as Eli did his sons, reprove him so gently as Jehosaphat did Ahab, "Let not the king say so," doth usually as much harm as good. (1 Sam. xxiii.; 1 Kings xxii. 8.) I am persuaded the very manner of some men's reproof and exhortation, hath hardened many a sinner in the way of destruction. To tell them of sin, or of heaven, or hell, in a dull, easy, careless language, doth make men think you are not in good sadness, nor do mean as you speak; but either you scarce think yourselves such things are true, or else you take them in such a slight and indifferent manner. O sirs, deal with sin as sin, and speak of heaven and hell as they are, and not as if you were in jest. I confess, I have failed much in this myself; the Lord lay it not to my charge. Lothness to displease men, makes us undo them,

Sect. IX. 6. Yet, lest you run into extremes, I advise you to do it with prudence and discretion. Be as serious as you can; but yet with wisdom. And especially you must be wise in these things following:

1. In choosing the fittest season for your exhortation, not to deal with men when they are in passion, or drink, or in public where they will take it for a disgrace. Men should observe when sinners are fittest to hear instructions. Physic must not be given at all times, but in season. Opportunity advantageth every work. It is an excellent example that Paul giveth us Gal. ii. 2. He communicateth the Gospel to them, yet privately to them of reputation, lest he should run in vain. Some men would take this to be a sinful complying with their corruption, to yield so far to their pride and bashfulness, as to teach them only in private, because they would be ashamed to own the truth in public. But Paul knew how great a hinderance men's reputation is to their entertaining of the truth, and that the remedy must not only be fitted to the disease, but also to the strength of the patient, and that in so doing, the physician is not guilty of favouring the disease, but is praiseworthy for taking the right way to cure it; and that learners and young beginners must not be dealt with as open professors. Moreover, means will work easily if you take the opportunity; when the earth is soft, the plough will enter. Take a man when he is under affliction, or in the house of mourning, or newly stirred by some moving sermon, and then set it home, and you may do him good. Christian faithfulness doth require us, not only to do good when it falls in our way, but to watch for opportunities of doing good.*

2. Be wise also in suiting your exhortation to the quality and temper of the person. All meats are not for all stomachs: one man will vomit that up again in your face, which another will digest. 1. If it be a learned, or ingenious, rational man, you must deal more by convincing arguments, and less by passionate persuasions. 2. If it be one that is both ignorant and stupid, there is need of both. 3. If one that is convinced, but yet is not converted, you must use most those means that rouse

* Junius writes, in the history of his own life, how his father, seeing him infected with atheism, did not chide him, or dispute against him, but repressed his rashness with holy, grave, reverent speeches, and laid open the Bible in his chamber; and he addeth, Sciebat enim vir sapientissimus non intrudi pietatem, sed instillari mentibus; non impingi, sed infundi: non imperari, sed doceri: non cogi, sed suaderi velle.

up the affections. 4. If they be obstinate and secure, you must reprove them sharply. 5. If they be of timorous, tender natures, and apt to dejections or distractions, they must be tenderly dealt with. All cannot bear that rough dealing as some can. Love, and plainness, and seriousness, take with all: but words of terror some can scarce bear. This is (as we say of stronger physic, 'hellebore, colloquintida, &c. et nec puero, nec seni, nec imbecillo, sed robusto,' &c.) not fit for every complexion and state.[b]

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Sect. XII. 9. Strive to bring all your exhortation to an issue; stick not in the work done, but look after the success, and aim at the end in all your speeches.[e] I have long observed it in ministers and private men, that if they speak ever so convincing and powerful words, and yet their hearts do not long after the success of them with the hearers, but all their care is over when they have done their speech, pretending that having done their duty, they leave the issue to God, these men do seldom prosper in their labours; but those whose very heart is set upon the work, and that long to see it take for the hearer's conversion, and use to inquire how it speeds, God usually blesseth their labours, though more weak. Labour, therefore, to drive all your speeches to the desired issue. If you are reproving a sin, cease not till (if it may be) you have got the sinner to promise you to leave it, and to avoid the occasions of it: if you are exhorting to a duty, urge the party to promise you presently to set upon it. If you would draw them to Christ, leave not till you

[d] Luke xviii. 1; Heb. iii. 13; 2 Tim. iv. 3. Ut iguis è silice non uno ictu, &c. Si fieri posset, etiam ab ipsis inferis extrahendi nobis sunt homines. *Calvin*, in Acts viii. 22.

[e] Hence we may gather that those men seek not the edification of their brother, who, when they have spoken to him once or twice, do think they have fully done their duty.—*Muscul.* in Matt. vii. tom. i. p. 155.

have made them confess that their present unregenerate state is miserable, and not to be rested in; and till they have subscribed to the necessity of Christ, and of a change, and till they have promised you to fall close to the use of means. O that all Christians would be persuaded to take this course with all their neighbours that are yet in the flesh, that are enslaved to sin, and strangers to Christ!

Sect. XIII. 10. Lastly, Be sure that your examples may exhort as well as your words.[f] Let them see you constant in all the duties that you persuade them to: let them see in your lives that difference from sinners, and that excellency above the world, which you persuade them to in your speeches. Let them see by your constant labours for heaven, that you do indeed believe that which you would have them to believe. If you tell others of the admirable joys of heaven, and yourselves do nothing but drudge for the world, and are as much taken up in striving to be rich, or as quarrelsome with your neighbours in a case of commodity, as any others, who will then believe you; or who will be persuaded by you to seek the everlasting riches? Will they not rather think, that you persuade them to look after another world, and to neglect this, that so you might have the more of it to yourself? Let not men see you proud, while you exhort them to be humble: nor to have a seared conscience in one thing, while you would have theirs tender in another. An innocent life is a continual, powerful reproof to the wicked: and the constant practice of a holy and heavenly life, is a constant disquietment to the conscience of a worldling, and a constant solicitation to him to change his course.

And thus I have opened to you the first and great part of this duty, consisting in private, familiar exhortation, for the helping of poor souls to this rest, that are out of the way, and have yet no title to it; and I have showed you also the manner how to perform it that you may succeed. I will now speak a little of the next part.

Sect. XIV. Besides the duty of private admonition, you must do your utmost endeavours to help men to profit by the public ordinances. And to that end you must do these things. First,

[f] Nec sic inflectere sensus humanos edicta valent quam vita regentis, Primus jussa subi; tunc observantior æqui. Fit populus. Loripidem rectus derideat, Æthiopem albus. Quis tulerit Gracchos de seditione querentes? Si fur displiceat Verri, homicida Miloni, &c. Si quis opprobriis dignum latraverit integer ipse, &c.

Do your endeavours for the procuring of faithful ministers where they are wanting.[g] This is God's ordinary means of converting and saving. How shall they hear without a preacher? Not only for your own sakes therefore, but for the poor miserable ones about you, do all you can to bring this to pass. If the Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost. Where vision faileth, the people perish. Improve, therefore, all your interest and diligence to this end. Ride, and go, and seek, and make friends, till you do prevail; if means be wanting to maintain a minister, extend your purses to the utmost, rather than the means of men's salvation should be wanting. Who knoweth how many souls may bless you, who have been converted and saved by the ministry which you have procured? It is a higher and nobler work of charity, than if you gave all that you have to relieve their bodies: though both must be regarded, yet the soul in the first place. What abundance of good might great men do in this, if they were faithful improvers of their interests and estates, as men that believe God hath the chief interest, and will shortly call them to an account for their stewardship! What unhappy reformers hath the church still met withal, that instead of taking away the corruptions in the church, do diminish that maintenance which should further the work! If our ignorant forefathers gave it for the service of the church, and their more knowing posterity do take it away, without the least pretence of right to it; I doubt not but the pious intent of progenitors will more extenuate the fault of their ignorance, than the knowledge of their posterity will excuse their sacrilege. Alas, that the sad example of King Henry the Eighth's Reformation, and the almost miraculous consumption of the estates of impropriators,[h] and the many hundred congregations that live in woful darkness for want of maintenance for a ministry, should yet be no more effectual a warning to this age! If they take away most, and give back a little, we are beholden to their bounty. If a corrupt officer

[g] Rom. x. 14; 2 Cor. iv. 3; Prov. xxix. 18. By sleight or by force they so muzzle the poor labouring ox that they make an ass of him.—*Thomas Scott, in his Projector*, p. 31. Sacrilegio pœna est; neque ei soli qui e sacro abstulerit, sed etiam ei qui sacro commendatum.—*Cicero*, lib. xii. de leg. Cum diis pugnant sacrilegi.—*Qu. Curtius*, lib. vii.

[h] Hath not England already been as the eagle's nest that was set on fire with a coal that stuck to the flesh which was stolen from the altar? De ecclesia qui aliquid furatur Judæ proditori comparatur.—*Aug. in Joham.* The arguments used of late to excuse this heinous sin, are much of the nature of those which Dionysius was wont to use in the like case. Vid. in Valerii Maximi, lib. i. c. 2; et Justin. lib. xxii.

lose his interest, the church doth not lose hers. Here is a great talk of reducing the church to the primitive pattern: if so, I dare affirm that every church must have many ministers. And they that know wherein the work of the ministry doth consist, will no more wonder at that, than that a regiment of soldiers should have many officers. And how will that be, when they will scarcely afford maintenance for one? [h] They are likelier to bring the church to the primitive poverty, than to the primitive pattern. If I were not known to be quite beyond their exceptions myself, I might not say so much, lest I were thought to plead my own interest; especially a dying man should be out of the reach of such accusations. But the Lord knoweth, that it is not a desire that ministers should be rich, that maketh me speak this; but earnest desire of the happiness of the church; nor do I mean the ministry only by the word "church." It is the people that are robbed and bear the loss, more than the ministers: ministers must and will have maintenance, or else men will set their children to other studies; when there is no other, the people must allow it themselves, or be without. What minister can well oversee, and watch over more than a thousand souls? Nor I think so many. Many congregations have four thousand, ten thousand, twenty thousand, some fifty thousand, yea, seventy thousand. How many officers will the state maintain in an army of thirty thousand? I had almost said, the work of governing the church is greater, and hath need of as many. I would all Scripture and primitive patterns were well viewed in this. O happy reformation, if able godly men were put in places, or in right offices, without such diminution of the

[h] To make up that number of ministers that the church should have, now the maintenance is taken away, I would rich men would study and enter into the ministry who can maintain themselves, and so do the work freely. Let them know to their faces, that it is a work that the greatest lord in the land is not too good for. See what Hierom saith ad Damasum: "Clericos illos convenit ecclesiæ stipendiis sustentari, quibus parentum et amicorum nulla suffragantur stipendia. Qui autem bonis parentum et opibus sustineri possunt, si quod pauperum est, accipiunt, sacrilegium profecto incurrunt, et committunt." And, besides, it would bear up the credit of the office, and take off much prejudice from the people. But our gentlemen generally have their pleasure, wealth, and honour, in such high esteem, and Christ and his Gospel and church in such disesteem, that they would take it for a disgrace to turn ministers, or to fit and devote themselves or children to it, and so to serve Christ freely. Where is the gentleman in England that hath done thus? They will rail at ministers for covetousness, because they will not serve at the altar, and not live on the altar, who have no other maintenance; but when will themselves that have more, devote themselves freely to this work? Will they not rather increase their great estates with robbing God?

number or the maintenance! Or if a supply at present could not be had, yet should they not have overthrown the hopes of posterity. But to leave this digression, I hope those that God hath called to his work, will labour, nevertheless, for the shortness of their maintenance: and those of the people that can do no more, can yet pray the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth labourers. And he that hath put that petition into our mouths, I hope will put the answer into our hands.

Sect. XV. 2. Yet it is not enough that you seek after teachers, but especially you must seek after such as are fitted for the work. An ignorant empiric that killeth more than he cureth, doth not so much differ from an able physician, as an unskilful minister from one that is able. Alas! this is the great defect among us: men that are fitted for the work indeed, are most wonders; one, or two, or three, or four in some counties is much.[1] How few that have dived into the mysteries of divinity; or have thoroughly studied the most needful controversies; or are able to explain or maintain the truth! But only they store their memories with the opinions and phrases of those teachers that are in most credit, in common cases; and then they think they are divines: and every man that steps out of their common road, they can say that he is erroneous or heretical; but how to confute him they cannot tell. And almost as few that are well skilled in managing known truths upon the conscience. Alas! whence cometh this misery to the church? There is not a choice made of the most excellent wits, and those youths that are ripest in learning and religion: but some of them are so rich, that the ministry is too mean for them: and some so poor, that they have no maintenance to subsist on at the universities. And so every one that is best furnished to make a trade of the ministry, or whose parents have best affection to it, how unfit

[1] Præsident nobis probati quique seniores, honorem istum non pretio sed testimonio adepti.—*Tertul. Apolog.* c. 29. He mentioneth not two sorts of elders, but one, whose office lay chiefly in ruling or guiding, though all had authority to teach also. For God's sake, and the sake of poor souls, gentlemen, put this in practice presently. You will hardly lay out your estates in a way that will afford you more comfort at your accounting time? If you will not part with a little for God, you shall part with more to men; and with all shortly, but less to your comfort. And be sure you choose the fittest, and not the most befriended. How far doth our charity come short of the primitive Christians, though our riches be far greater! Tertullian saith to heathens, Plus nostri misericordia insumit vicatim, quam religio vestra templatim. —*Apolog. adv. Gentes*, c. 42. See Capel's Epistle Dedicatory before 'Mr. Pemble on the Sacrament.'

soever the child is, must be a minister: and those few, very few, choice wits that would be fittest, are diverted.

How small a matter were it, and yet how excellent a work, for every knight or gentleman of means in England, to cull out some one or two, or more poor boys in the country schools, who are of the choicest wits and most pious dispositions, who are poor and unable to proceed in learning, and to maintain them a few years in the universities, till they were fit for the ministry! It were but keeping a few superfluous attendants the less, or a few horses or dogs the less: if they had hearts to do it, it were easily spared out of their sports, or rich apparel, or superfluous diet; or, what if it were out of more useful costs, or out of their children's larger portions? I dare say they would not be sorry for it when they come to their reckoning. One sumptuous feast, or one costly suit of apparel, would maintain a poor boy a year or two at the university, who, perhaps, might come to have more true worth in him than many a glittering, sensual lord, and to do God more service in his church than ever they did with all their estates and power.

Sect. XVI. 3. And when you do enjoy the blessing of the Gospel, you must yet use your utmost diligence to help poor souls to receive the fruit of it. To which end you must draw them constantly to hear and attend it. Mind them often of what they have heard: draw them, if it be possible, to repeat it in their families. If that cannot be, then draw them to come to others that do repeat it, that so it may not die in the hearing. The very drawing of men into the company and acquaintance of the godly,[k] besides the benefit they have by their endeavours, is of singular use to the recovery of their souls. Association breedeth familiarity, and familiarity breedeth love; and familiarity and love to the godly, doth lead to familiarity and love to God and godliness. It is also a means to take

[k] This coming together of Christians is, indeed, unlawful, if to unlawful ends, and, accordingly, to be condemned. If any complain of it, as of faction, to whose hurt did we ever meet? We are the same together as we are asunder; the same all in a body as we are singularly; hurting no man, grieving no man. When honest and good men come together, when godly and chaste people are assembled, it is not to be called a faction, but a court. But, on the contrary, the name of faction is to be given to them who conspire together in hatred of good and honest men; that cry out against the blood of the innocent; pretending this vanity in defence of their hatred, that they think the Christians are the cause of every public calamity, and every loss of the people.—*Tertul. Apolog. adv. Gentes*, c. 39, 40.

off prejudice, by confuting the world's slanders of the ways and people of God. Use, therefore, often to meet together, besides the more public meeting in the congregation: not to vent any unsound opinions, nor yet in distaste of the public meeting, nor in opposition to it, nor at the time of public worship, nor yet to make a groundless schism, or to separate from the church whereof you are members; nor to destroy the old that you may gather a new church out of its ruins, as long as it hath the essentials, and there is hope of reforming it; nor yet would I have you forward to vent your own supposed gifts and parts in teaching, where there is no necessity of it; nor to attempt that in the interpretation of difficult scriptures, or explication of difficult controversies, which is beyond your ability, though, perhaps, pride will tell you that you are as able as any. But the work which I would have you meet about, is this, to repeat together the word which you have heard in public; to pour out your joint prayers for the church and yourselves; to join in cheerful singing the praises of God; to open your scruples, and doubts, and fears, and get resolution; to quicken each other in love, and heavenliness, and holy walking; and all this, not as a separated church, but as a part of the church more diligent than the rest in redeeming time, and helping the souls of each other heavenward.

I know some careless ones think this course needless; and I know some formalists do think it schismatical, who have nothing of any moment to say against it. Against both these, if I durst so far digress, I could easily prove it warrantable and useful. I know also that many of late do abuse private meetings to schism, and to vilify God's ordinances, and vent the windy issue of their empty brains. But betwixt these extremes, I advise you to walk, and neither to "forsake the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhort one another." (Heb. x. 25.) Nor yet to be "carried about with divers and strange doctrine:" but let all your private meetings be in subordination to the public, and by the approbation and consent of your spiritual guides, and not without them of your own heads, where such guides are men of knowledge and godliness; remembering them which have the rule over you, which speak to you the word of God, following their faith, and as men whose hearts are stablished with grace, considering the whole end of a Christian's conversation, Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever. (Heb. xiii. 7—9, 17.)

"And I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which you have learned, and avoid them: for they that are such, serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." (Rom. xvi. 17, 18.) I would you would ponder every one of these words, for they are the precious advice of the Spirit of God, and necessary now, as well as then.

Sect. XVII. 4. One thing more I advise you concerning this. If you would have souls converted and saved by the ordinances, labour still to keep the ordinances and ministry in esteem. No man will be much wrought on by that which he despiseth. The great causes of this contempt, are a perverted judgment and a graceless heart. It is no more wonder for a soul to loathe the ordinances, that savoureth not their spiritual nature, nor seeth God in them, nor is thoroughly wrought on by them, than it is for a sick man to loathe his food. Nor is it any wonder for a perverted understanding to make a jest of God himself, much less to set light by his ordinances. Oh! what a rare blessing is a clear, sound, sanctified judgment! Where this is wanting, the most hellish vice may seem a virtue, and the most sacred ordinance of divine institution may seem as the waters of Jordan to Naaman. If any enemies to God's ordinances assault you, I refer you to the reading of Mr. Henry Lawrence's late book for ordinances.

The profane scorners of the ministry and worship heretofore, were the means of keeping many a soul from heaven; but the late generation of proud ignorant sectaries amongst us, have quite outstripped in this the vile persecutors.[1] O how many souls may curse these wretches in hell for ever, that have by them been brought to contemn the means that should save them! By many years' experience in my conversing with these men, I can speak it knowingly, that the chiefest of their zeal is

[1] To them that think I speak too harshly, I say as Dr. Sutlive, in 'Præfat. de Monachis contra Bellarminum:' "Res est plane ardua, de hominum genere impudentissimo modeste; de turpissimo et sceleratissimo modice et sine acerbitate loqui. Moderatus tamen sum ipse mihi, quantum licuit; et non quid ipsi de nobis meruerint, sed quid nostros homines deceat, spectavi." And let the greatest that are guilty read Cyprian's words, and tremble. What greater crime can there be, than to have stood up against Christ, in his officers and discipline; than to have scattered the church of Christ, which he hath purchased with his blood and built; than to have fought, by the fury of hostile discord, against the unanimous and agreeing people of God? Who, though themselves should repent and return to the church, yet can they not

Sect. IX. 6. Yet, lest you run into extremes, I advise you to do it with prudence and discretion. Be as serious as you can; but yet with wisdom. And especially you must be wise in these things following:

1. In choosing the fittest season for your exhortation, not to deal with men when they are in passion, or drink, or in public where they will take it for a disgrace. Men should observe when sinners are fittest to hear instructions. Physic must not be given at all times, but in season. Opportunity advantageth every work. It is an excellent example that Paul giveth us Gal. ii. 2. He communicateth the Gospel to them, yet privately to them of reputation, lest he should run in vain. Some men would take this to be a sinful complying with their corruption, to yield so far to their pride and bashfulness, as to teach them only in private, because they would be ashamed to own the truth in public. But Paul knew how great a hinderance men's reputation is to their entertaining of the truth, and that the remedy must not only be fitted to the disease, but also to the strength of the patient, and that in so doing, the physician is not guilty of favouring the disease, but is praiseworthy for taking the right way to cure it; and that learners and young beginners must not be dealt with as open professors. Moreover, means will work easily if you take the opportunity; when the earth is soft, the plough will enter. Take a man when he is under affliction, or in the house of mourning, or newly stirred by some moving sermon, and then set it home, and you may do him good. Christian faithfulness doth require us, not only to do good when it falls in our way, but to watch for opportunities of doing good.[a]

2. Be wise also in suiting your exhortation to the quality and temper of the person. All meats are not for all stomachs: one man will vomit that up again in your face, which another will digest. 1. If it be a learned, or ingenious, rational man, you must deal more by convincing arguments, and less by passionate persuasions. 2. If it be one that is both ignorant and stupid, there is need of both. 3. If one that is convinced, but yet is not converted, you must use most those means that rouse

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up the affections. 4. If they be obstinate and secure, you must reprove them sharply. 5. If they be of timorous, tender natures, and apt to dejections or distractions, they must be tenderly dealt with. All cannot bear that rough dealing as some can. Love, and plainness, and seriousness, take with all: but words of terror some can scarce bear. This is (as we say of stronger physic, 'hellebore, colloquintida, &c. et nec puero, nec seni, nec imbecillo, sed robusto,' &c.) not fit for every complexion and state.[b]

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peareth in our words, so much will they take. The voice of man is contemptible, but the voice of God is awful and terrible. They can and may reject your words, they cannot dare reject the words of the Almighty. Be sure, therefore, to make them know that you speak nothing but what God hath spoken first.

Sect. XI. 8. You must also be frequent with men in this duty of exhortation; it is not once or twice that usually will prevail. If God himself must be constantly solicited, as if importunity could prevail with him when nothing else can, and therefore requires us always to pray, and not to wax faint, the same course, no doubt, will be most prevailing with men. Therefore, we are commanded "to exhort one another daily, and with all long suffering." As Lipsius saith, "The fire is not always brought out of the flint at one stroke; nor men's affections kindled at the first exhortation." [d] And if they were, yet if they be not followed, they will soon grow cold again. Weary out sinners with your loving and earnest entreaties; follow them, and give them no rest in their sin. This is true charity, and this is the way to save men's souls; and a course that will afford you comfort upon review.

Sect. XII. 9. Strive to bring all your exhortation to an issue; stick not in the work done, but look after the success, and aim at the end in all your speeches.[e] I have long observed it in ministers and private men, that if they speak ever so convincing and powerful words, and yet their hearts do not long after the success of them with the hearers, but all their care is over when they have done their speech, pretending that having done their duty, they leave the issue to God, these men do seldom prosper in their labours; but those whose very heart is set upon the work, and that long to see it take for the hearer's conversion, and use to inquire how it speeds, God usually blesseth their labours, though more weak. Labour, therefore, to drive all your speeches to the desired issue. If you are reproving a sin, cease not till (if it may be) you have got the sinner to promise you to leave it, and to avoid the occasions of it: if you are exhorting to a duty, urge the party to promise you presently to set upon it. If you would draw them to Christ, leave not till you

[d] Luke xviii. 1; Heb. iii. 13; 2 Tim. iv. 3. Ut ignis è silice non uno ictu, &c. Si fieri posset, etiam ab ipsis inferis extrahendi nobis sunt homines. *Calvin*, in Acts viii. 22.

[e] Hence we may gather that those men seek not the edification of their brother, who, when they have spoken to him once or twice, do think they have fully done their duty.—*Muscul.* in Matt. vii. tom. i. p. 155.

have made them confess that their present unregenerate state is miserable, and not to be rested in; and till they have subscribed to the necessity of Christ, and of a change, and till they have promised you to fall close to the use of means. O that all Christians would be persuaded to take this course with all their neighbours that are yet in the flesh, that are enslaved to sin, and strangers to Christ!

Sect. XIII. 10. Lastly, Be sure that your examples may exhort as well as your words.[f] Let them see you constant in all the duties that you persuade them to: let them see in your lives that difference from sinners, and that excellency above the world, which you persuade them to in your speeches. Let them see by your constant labours for heaven, that you do indeed believe that which you would have them to believe. If you tell others of the admirable joys of heaven, and yourselves do nothing but drudge for the world, and are as much taken up in striving to be rich, or as quarrelsome with your neighbours in a case of commodity, as any others, who will then believe you; or who will be persuaded by you to seek the everlasting riches? Will they not rather think, that you persuade them to look after another world, and to neglect this, that so you might have the more of it to yourself? Let not men see you proud, while you exhort them to be humble: nor to have a seared conscience in one thing, while you would have theirs tender in another. An innocent life is a continual, powerful reproof to the wicked: and the constant practice of a holy and heavenly life, is a constant disquietment to the conscience of a worldling, and a constant solicitation to him to change his course.

And thus I have opened to you the first and great part of this duty, consisting in private, familiar exhortation, for the helping of poor souls to this rest, that are out of the way, and have yet no title to it; and I have showed you also the manner how to perform it that you may succeed. I will now speak a little of the next part.

Sect. XIV. Besides the duty of private admonition, you must do your utmost endeavours to help men to profit by the public ordinances. And to that end you must do these things. First,

[f] Nec sic inflectere sensus humanos edicta valent quam vita regentis. Primus jussa subi; tunc observantior æqui. Fit populus. Loripidem rectus derideat, Æthiopem albus. Quis tulerit Gracchos de seditione querentes? Si fur displiceat Verri, homicida Miloni, &c. Si quis opprobriis dignum latraverit integer ipse, &c.

Do your endeavours for the procuring of faithful ministers where they are wanting.[g] This is God's ordinary means of converting and saving. How shall they hear without a preacher? Not only for your own sakes therefore, but for the poor miserable ones about you, do all you can to bring this to pass. If the Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost. Where vision faileth, the people perish. Improve, therefore, all your interest and diligence to this end. Ride, and go, and seek, and make friends, till you do prevail; if means be wanting to maintain a minister, extend your purses to the utmost, rather than the means of men's salvation should be wanting. Who knoweth how many souls may bless you, who have been converted and saved by the ministry which you have procured? It is a higher and nobler work of charity, than if you gave all that you have to relieve their bodies: though both must be regarded, yet the soul in the first place. What abundance of good might great men do in this, if they were faithful improvers of their interests and estates, as men that believe God hath the chief interest, and will shortly call them to an account for their stewardship! What unhappy reformers hath the church still met withal, that instead of taking away the corruptions in the church, do diminish that maintenance which should further the work! If our ignorant forefathers gave it for the service of the church, and their more knowing posterity do take it away, without the least pretence of right to it; I doubt not but the pious intent of progenitors will more extenuate the fault of their ignorance, than the knowledge of their posterity will excuse their sacrilege. Alas, that the sad example of King Henry the Eighth's Reformation, and the almost miraculous consumption of the estates of impropriators,[h] and the many hundred congregations that live in woful darkness for want of maintenance for a ministry, should yet be no more effectual a warning to this age! If they take away most, and give back a little, we are beholden to their bounty. If a corrupt officer

[g] Rom. x. 14; 2 Cor. iv. 3; Prov. xxix. 18. By sleight or by force they so muzzle the poor labouring ox that they make an ass of him.—*Thomas Scott, in his Projector*, p. 31. Sacrilegio pœna est; neque ei soli qui e sacro abstulerit, sed etiam ei qui sacro commendatum.—*Cicero*, lib. xii. de leg. Cum diis pugnant sacrilegi.—*Qu. Curtius*, lib. vii.

[h] Hath not England already been as the eagle's nest that was set on fire with a coal that stuck to the flesh which was stolen from the altar? De ecclesia qui aliquid furatur Judæ proditori comparatur.—*Aug. in Johan.* The arguments used of late to excuse this heinous sin, are much of the nature of those which Dionysius was wont to use in the like case. Vid. in Valerii Maximi, lib. i. c. 2; et Justin. lib. xxii.

lose his interest, the church doth not lose hers. Here is a great talk of reducing the church to the primitive pattern: if so, I dare affirm that every church must have many ministers. And they that know wherein the work of the ministry doth consist, will no more wonder at that, than that a regiment of soldiers should have many officers. And how will that be, when they will scarcely afford maintenance for one? [h] They are likelier to bring the church to the primitive poverty, than to the primitive pattern. If I were not known to be quite beyond their exceptions myself, I might not say so much, lest I were thought to plead my own interest; especially a dying man should be out of the reach of such accusations. But the Lord knoweth, that it is not a desire that ministers should be rich, that maketh me speak this; but earnest desire of the happiness of the church; nor do I mean the ministry only by the word "church." It is the people that are robbed and bear the loss, more than the ministers: ministers must and will have maintenance, or else men will set their children to other studies; when there is no other, the people must allow it themselves, or be without. What minister can well oversee, and watch over more than a thousand souls? Nor I think so many. Many congregations have four thousand, ten thousand, twenty thousand, some fifty thousand, yea, seventy thousand. How many officers will the state maintain in an army of thirty thousand? I had almost said, the work of governing the church is greater, and hath need of as many. I would all Scripture and primitive patterns were well viewed in this. O happy reformation, if able godly men were put in places, or in right offices, without such diminution of the

[h] To make up that number of ministers that the church should have, now the maintenance is taken away, I would rich men would study and enter into the ministry who can maintain themselves, and so do the work freely. Let them know to their faces, that it is a work that the greatest lord in the land is not too good for. See what Hierom saith ad Damasum: "Clericos illos convenit ecclesiæ stipendiis sustentari, quibus parentum et amicorum nulla suffragantur stipendia. Qui autem bonis parentum et opibus sustineri possunt, si quod pauperum est, accipiunt, sacrilegium profecto incurrunt, et committunt." And, besides, it would bear up the credit of the office, and take off much prejudice from the people. But our gentlemen generally have their pleasure, wealth, and honour, in such high esteem, and Christ and his Gospel and church in such disesteem, that they would take it for a disgrace to turn ministers, or to fit and devote themselves or children to it, and so to serve Christ freely. Where is the gentleman in England that hath done thus? They will rail at ministers for covetousness, because they will not serve at the altar, and not live on the altar, who have no other maintenance; but when will themselves that have more, devote themselves freely to this work? Will they not rather increase their great estates with robbing God?

therefore, you must sharpen your exhortation, and set it home, and follow it with their hearts, till you have roused them up, and made them begin to look about them. Let them know that thou speakest no tto them of indifferent things, nor about children's games, or worldlings' vanities, or matters of a few days' or years' continuance, nor yet about matters of uncertainty, which perhaps may never come to pass; but it is about the saving and damning of their souls and bodies, and whether they shall be blessed with Christ or tormented with devils, and that for ever and ever without any change; it is how to stand before God in judgment, and what answer to give, and how they are like to speed: and this judgment and eternal state they shall very shortly see, they are almost at it, yet a few more nights and days, and they shall presently be at that last day; a few more breaths they have to breathe, and they shall breathe out their last, and then as certainly shall they see that mighty change, as the heaven is over their heads, and the earth under their feet. O labour to make men know that it is mad jesting about salvation or damnation, and that heaven and hell be not matters to be played with, or passed over with a few careless thoughts. It is most certain that one of these days thou shalt be either in everlasting, unchangeable joy or torments; and doth it not awake thee? Is there so few that find the way of life, so many that go the way of death? Is it so hard to escape, so easy to miscarry? and that while we fear nothing but think all is well; and yet you sit still and trifle; why what do you mean? What do you think on? The world is passing away; its pleasures are fading; its honours are leaving you; its profits will prove unprofitable to you; heaven or hell are a little before you; God is just and jealous; his threatenings are true; the great day of his judgement will be terrible; your time runs on; your lives are uncertain; you are far behindhand; you have loitered long; your case is dangerous; your souls are far gone in sin; you are strange to God; you are hardened in evil customs; you have no assurance of pardon to show; if you die tomorrow, how unready are you, and with what terror will your souls go out of your bodies! and do you yet loiter for all this? why, consider with yourselves: God standeth all this while

confess, and most of the moderns with him, as he there saith, though in partiality to Peter he maketh a long stir to excuse him, even from all fault: which I dare say Peter would not do himself, if he were to speak his own case. —See *Suarez de Legibus*, lib. ix. *de Lege Divin. posit.* c. xx. pp. 792—794, &c.

waiting your leisure: his patience beareth, his justice forbeareth; his mercy entreateth you; Christ standeth offering you his blood and his merits; you may have him freely, and life with him; the Spirit is persuading you; conscience is accusing and urging you; ministers are praying for you, and calling upon you; Satan stands waiting, when justice shall cut off your lives, that he may have you: this is your time: now or never. What! had you rather lose heaven than your profits or pleasures? Had you rather burn in hell than repent on earth? Had you rather howl and roar there, than pray day and night for mercy here? Or to have devils your tormentors, than to have Christ your governor? Will you renounce your part in God and glory, rather than renounce your cursed sins? Do you think a holy life too much for heaven, or too dear a course to prevent an endless misery? O friends, what do you think of these things? God hath made you men, and endued you with reason, do you renounce your reason where you should chiefly use it? In this manner you must deal roundly and seriously with men. Alas! it is not a few dull words, between jest and earnest, between sleep and waking, as it were, that will waken an ignorant, dead-hearted sinner. When a dull hearer and a dull speaker meet together, a dead heart and a dead exhortation, it is far unlike to have a lively effect. If a man fall down in a swoon, you will not stand trifling with him, but lay hands on him presently, and snatch him up, and rub him, and call aloud to him; if a house be on fire, you will not in a cold affected strain go tell your neighbour of it, nor go make an oration of the nature and danger of fire; but you will run out, and cry, 'Fire, fire.' Matters of moment must be seriously dealt with. To tell a man of his sins as softly as Eli did his sons, reprove him so gently as Jehosaphat did Ahab, "Let not the king say so," doth usually as much harm as good. (1 Sam. xxiii.; 1 Kings xxii. 8.) I am persuaded the very manner of some men's reproof and exhortation, hath hardened many a sinner in the way of destruction. To tell them of sin, or of heaven, or hell, in a dull, easy, careless language, doth make men think you are not in good sadness, nor do mean as you speak; but either you scarce think yourselves such things are true, or else you take them in such a slight and indifferent manner. O sirs, deal with sin as sin, and speak of heaven and hell as they are, and not as if you were in jest. I confess, I have failed much in this myself; the Lord lay it not to my charge. Lothness to displease men, makes us undo them,

off prejudice, by confuting the world's slanders of the ways and people of God. Use, therefore, often to meet together, besides the more public meeting in the congregation: not to vent any unsound opinions, nor yet in distaste of the public meeting, nor in opposition to it, nor at the time of public worship, nor yet to make a groundless schism, or to separate from the church whereof you are members; nor to destroy the old that you may gather a new church out of its ruins, as long as it hath the essentials, and there is hope of reforming it; nor yet would I have you forward to vent your own supposed gifts and parts in teaching, where there is no necessity of it; nor to attempt that in the interpretation of difficult scriptures, or explication of difficult controversies, which is beyond your ability, though, perhaps, pride will tell you that you are as able as any. But the work which I would have you meet about, is this, to repeat together the word which you have heard in public; to pour out your joint prayers for the church and yourselves; to join in cheerful singing the praises of God; to open your scruples, and doubts, and fears, and get resolution; to quicken each other in love, and heavenliness, and holy walking; and all this, not as a separated church, but as a part of the church more diligent than the rest in redeeming time, and helping the souls of each other heavenward.

I know some careless ones think this course needless; and I know some formalists do think it schismatical, who have nothing of any moment to say against it. Against both these, if I durst so far digress, I could easily prove it warrantable and useful. I know also that many of late do abuse private meetings to schism, and to vilify God's ordinances, and vent the windy issue of their empty brains. But betwixt these extremes, I advise you to walk, and neither to "forsake the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhort one another." (Heb. x. 25.) Nor yet to be "carried about with divers and strange doctrine:" but let all your private meetings be in subordination to the public, and by the approbation and consent of your spiritual guides, and not without them of your own heads, where such guides are men of knowledge and godliness; remembering them which have the rule over you, which speak to you the word of God, following their faith, and as men whose hearts are stablished with grace, considering the whole end of a Christian's conversation, Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever. (Heb. xiii. 7—9, 17.)

"And I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which you have learned, and avoid them: for they that are such, serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." (Rom. xvi. 17, 18.) I would you would ponder every one of these words, for they are the precious advice of the Spirit of God, and necessary now, as well as then.

Sect. XVII. 4. One thing more I advise you concerning this. If you would have souls converted and saved by the ordinances, labour still to keep the ordinances and ministry in esteem. No man will be much wrought on by that which he despiseth. The great causes of this contempt, are a perverted judgment and a graceless heart. It is no more wonder for a soul to loathe the ordinances, that savoureth not their spiritual nature, nor seeth God in them, nor is thoroughly wrought on by them, than it is for a sick man to loathe his food. Nor is it any wonder for a perverted understanding to make a jest of God himself, much less to set light by his ordinances. Oh! what a rare blessing is a clear, sound, sanctified judgment! Where this is wanting, the most hellish vice may seem a virtue, and the most sacred ordinance of divine institution may seem as the waters of Jordan to Naaman. If any enemies to God's ordinances assault you, I refer you to the reading of Mr. Henry Lawrence's late book for ordinances.

The profane scorners of the ministry and worship heretofore, were the means of keeping many a soul from heaven; but the late generation of proud ignorant sectaries amongst us, have quite outstripped in this the vile persecutors.[1] O how many souls may curse these wretches in hell for ever, that have by them been brought to contemn the means that should save them! By many years' experience in my conversing with these men, I can speak it knowingly, that the chiefest of their zeal is

[1] To them that think I speak too harshly, I say as Dr. Sutlive, in 'Præfat. de Monachis contra Bellarminum:' "Res est plane ardua, de hominum genere impudentissimo modeste; de turpissimo et sceleratissimo modice et sine acerbitate loqui. Moderatus tamen sum ipse mihi, quantum licuit; et non quid ipsi de nobis meruerint, sed quid nostros homines deceat, spectavi." And let the greatest that are guilty read Cyprian's words, and tremble. What greater crime can there be, than to have stood up against Christ, in his officers and discipline; than to have scattered the church of Christ, which he hath purchased with his blood and built; than to have fought, by the fury of hostile discord, against the unanimous and agreeing people of God? Who, though themselves should repent and return to the church, yet can they not

let out against the faithful ministers of Christ. He is the ablest of their preachers that can rail at them in the most devilish language. It is their most common discourse in all companies, both godly and profane, to vilify the ministry, and make them odious to all, partly by slanders, and partly by scorns. Is this the way to win souls? Whereas, formerly, they thought that if a man were won to a love of the ministry and ordinances, he was in a hopeful way of being won to God. Now these men are diligent to bring all men to scorn them, as if this were all that were necessary to the saving of their souls, and he only shall be happy that can deride at ministers and discipline.[m] If any man doubt of the truth of what I say, he is a stranger in England, and for his satisfaction, let him read all the books of Martin Mar-priest, and tell me whether the devil ever spoke so with a tongue of flesh before. For you, my dear friends, I acknowledge to God's praise, that you are as far from the contempt of ordinances or ministry, as any people I know in the land. I shall confirm you herein, not in my own words, but in his that I know you dare not disregard. (1 Thes. v. 11—13.) "Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as ye also do: and we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their works' sake, and be at peace among yourselves. Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as those that must give an account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you." (Heb. xiii. 17.)

Thus you see part of your duty for the salvation of others.

Sect. XVIII. And now, Christian reader, seeing it is a duty that God hath laid upon every man according to his ability, thus

recover, and bring back with them those whom they have seduced, or those that, being by death prevented, are dead and perished without the church, without being absolved and restored to communion; whose souls at the day of judgment shall be required at their hands, who were the authors and leaders of them to perdition. It is enough, therefore, that they are pardoned that return; but perfidiousness must not be promoted in the house of faith. For what privilege do we reserve for good men and innocent, and that separate not, or depart not from the church, if we honour them that have separated or departed from us, and have stood against the church.—*Cyprian.* Epist. 72. ad Steph. Thus this blessed martyr of separatists.

[m] Let those that are the chaff of light belief fly away as much as they will whithersoever the wind of temptation drives them, the heap of corn in the Lord's floor shall be laid up so much the cleaner.—*Tertullian. de Præscrip.* c. 3.

to exhort and reprove, and with all possible diligence to labour after the salvation of all about him, judge then whether this work be conscionably performed. Where shall we find the man almost among us, that setteth himself to it with all his might, and that hath set his heart upon the souls of his brethren, that they may be saved?

Let us here, therefore, a little inquire what may be the causes of the gross neglect of this duty, that the hinderances being discovered may the more easily be overcome.

1. One hinderance is, men's own gracelessness and guiltiness. They have not been ravished themselves with the heavenly delights. How, then, should they draw others so earnestly to seek them? They have not felt the wickedness of their own natures, nor their lost condition, nor their need of Christ, nor felt the transforming renewing work of the Spirit. How, then, can they discover these to others? Ah! that this were not the case of many a learned preacher in England! And the cause why they preach so frozenly and generally! Men also are guilty themselves of the sins they should reprove, and this stops their mouth, and maketh them ashamed to reprove.

2. Another hinderance is, a secret infidelity prevailing in men's hearts; whereof even the best have so great a measure, that it causeth this duty to be done by the halves. Alas! sirs, we do not, surely, believe men's misery; we do not believe, surely, that the threatenings of God are true. Did we verily believe that all the unregenerate and unholy shall be eternally tormented, as God hath said, oh, how could we hold our tongues when we are among the unregenerate? How could we choose but burst out into tears when we look them in the face, as the prophet did when he looked upon Hazael? Especially when they are our kindred or friends, that are near and dear to us? Thus doth secret unbelief of the truth of Scripture consume the vigour of each grace and duty. Oh, Christians, if you did verily believe that your poor, carnal, ungodly neighbour, or wife, or husband, or child, should certainly lie for ever in the flames of hell, except they be thoroughly recovered and changed; and that quickly, before death doth snatch them from hence, would not this make you cast off all discouragements, and lay at them day and night till they were persuaded, and give them no rest in their carnal state? How could you hold your tongue, or let them alone till another day, if this were soundly believed? If you were sure that any of your dear friends, that are dead

were now in hell, and persuading to repentance would get him out again, would you not persuade him day and night, if he were in hearing? And why should you not do as much then to prevent it, while he is in your hearing, but that you do not believe God's word that speaks the danger? Why did Noah prepare an ark so long before, and persuade the world to save themselves, but because he believed God, that the flood should come? And, therefore, saith the Holy Ghost, "By faith Noah prepared the ark," (Heb. xi. 7,) and why did not the world hearken to his persuasion, and seek to save themselves as well as Noah, but because they did not believe there would be any such deluge? They see all fair and well, and therefore they thought that threatenings were but wind. The rich man in hell cries out, "Send to my brethren to warn them, that they come not to this place of torment;" (Luke xvi. 13;) he felt it, and therefore being convinced of its truth, would have them prevent it; but his brethren on earth, they did not see and feel as he, and therefore they did not believe, nor would have been persuaded, "though one had risen from the dead." I am afraid most of us do believe the predictions of Scripture but as we believe the predictions of an almanack, which telleth you that such a day will be rain, and such a day wind; you think it may come to pass, and it may not: and so you think of the predictions of the damnation of the wicked. Oh! were it not for this cursed unbelief, our own souls, and our neighbours, would gain more by us than they do.

3. This faithful dealing with men for their salvation, is much hindered also by our want of charity and compassion to men's souls.[n] We are hard-hearted and cruel towards the miserable; and, therefore, as the priest and the Levite did by the wounded man, we look on them, and pass by. Oh! what tender heart could endure to look upon a poor, blind, forlorn sinner, wounded by sin, and captivated by Satan, and never once open our mouths for his recovery? What though he be silent, and do

[n] Et per Deum immortalem, quid est quod nos impediat, ne miseris illis ex morbo et errore animi laborantibus acclamemus ad bonum, et à malefaciendo abstineamus quam fidelissime? Nam si illi cæci sunt; at nos fuimus. Si oberrant cæcitate; at nos oberravimus. Si denique impedimento sunt; at impedimentum habent, ut nos habuimus; quo magis nostra commiseratione et allevatione digni sunt.—*Junius Irenic.* tom. i. operum, p. 690. Charitatem quia non habent, nec ex charitate fratrem corrigunt, fit ut mox illum relinquunt: quam si haberent, non adeo confestim deficerent, et quod pejus est, deficiendi causas prætexerent, quatenus merito defecisse videantur.—*Muscul.* in Matt. vii. tom. i. p. 155.

not desire thy help himself, yet his very misery cries aloud: misery is the most effectual suitor to one that is compassionate. If God had not heard the cry of our miseries before he heard the cry of our prayers, and been moved by his own pity, before he was moved by our importunity, we might have long enough continued the slaves of Satan. Is it not the strongest way of arguing that a poor Lazarus hath, to unlap his sores, and show them to the passengers? All his words will not move them so much as such a pitiful sight. Alas! what pitiful sights do we daily see: the ignorant, the profane, the neglecters of Christ and their souls; their sores are open and visible to all that know them, and yet do we not pity them! You will pray to God for them, in customary duties, that God would open the eyes and turn the hearts of your ignorant, carnal friends and neighbours. And why do you not endeavour their conversion if you desire it? And if you do not desire it, why do you ask it? Doth not your negligence convince you of hypocrisy in your prayers, and of abusing the high God with your deceitful words? Your neighbours are near you, your friends are in the house with you; you eat, and drink, and work, and walk, and talk with them, and yet you say little or nothing to them. Why do you not pray to them to consider and return, as well as pray God to convert and turn them? Have you as oft and as earnestly begged of them to think on their ways, and to reform, as you have taken on you to beg of God that they may so do? What, if you should see your neighbour fallen into a pit, and you should presently fall down on your knees, and pray God to help him out, but would neither put forth your hand to help, nor once persuade or direct him to help himself, would not any man censure you to be cruel and hypocritical? What the Holy Ghost saith of men's bodily miseries, I may say much more of the misery of their souls: "If any man seeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" (1 John iii. 17.) Or, what love hath he to his brother's soul? Surely, if you saw your friend in hell, you would persuade him hard to come thence, if that would serve; and why do you not now persuade him to prevent it? The charity of our ignorant forefathers may rise up in judgment against us, and condemn us. They would give all their estates almost, for so many masses, or pardons, to deliver the souls of their friends from a feigned purgatory, and we will not so much as importunately admonish, and entreat them, to save them

from the certain flames of hell; though this may be effectual to do them good, and the other will do none.

4. Another hinderance is, a base man-pleasing disposition that is in us. We are so loth to displease men, and so desirous to keep in credit and favour with them, that it makes us most unconscionably neglect our known duty. A foolish physician he is, and a most unfaithful friend, that will let a sick man die for fear of troubling him; and cruel wretches are we to our friends, that will rather suffer them to go quietly to hell, than we will anger them, or hazard our reputation with them. If they did but fall in a swoon, we would rub them and pinch them, and never stick at hurting them. If they were distracted, we would bind them with chains, and we would please them in nothing that tended to their hurt; and yet, when they are beside themselves in point of salvation, and in their madness posting on to damnation, we will not stop them, for fear of displeasing them. How can these men be Christians, that love the praise and favour of men more than the favour of God? (John xii. 43.) For if they yet seek to please men, they are no longer the servants of Christ. (Gal. i. 10.) To win them indeed, they must become all things to all men; but to please them to their destruction, and let them perish, that we may keep our credit with them, is a course so base and barbarously cruel, that he that hath the face of a Christian should abhor it. (1 Cor. ix. 21—24; Prov. xi. 36.)

5. Another common hinderance is, a sinful bashfulness. When we should labour to make men ashamed of their sins, we are ourselves ashamed of our duties. May not these sinners condemn us, when they will not blush to swear, or be drunk, or neglect the worship of God, and we will blush to tell them of it, and persuade them from it? [o] Elisha looked on Hazael till he was ashamed; and we are ashamed to look on, or speak to the offender. (2 Kings viii. 11; Jer. vi. 15, viii. 12; Luke ix. 26.) Sinners will rather boast of their sins, and impudently show them in the open streets, and shall not we be as bold in drawing them from it? Not that I approve of impudence in any; for, as one saith, I take him for a lost man that hath lost his modesty. [p] Nor would I have inferiors forget their distance in admonishing their superiors; but do it with all humility, and submission, and respect. But yet I would much less have them

[o] There is no shame now among men, but to be poor and honest.—*Tho. Scot. Projector.*

[p] Illum ego perilsse dico, cui perilt pudor.—*Curtius.*

forget their duty to God and their friends, be they ever so much their superiors: it is a thing that must be done. Bashfulness is unseemly in cases of flat necessity. And, indeed, it is not a work to be ashamed of; to obey God in persuading men from their sins to Christ, and helping to save their souls, is not a business for a man to blush at; and yet, alas! what abundance of souls have been neglected through the prevailing of this sin! even the most of us are heinously guilty in this point. Reader, is not this thy own case? Hath not thy conscience told thee of thy duty many a time, and put thee on to speak to poor sinners, lest they perish, and yet thou hast been ashamed to open thy mouth to them, and so let them alone to sink or swim? believe me, thou wilt ere long be ashamed of this shame. O read those words of Christ, and tremble: "He that is ashamed of me and of my words before this adulterous generation, of him will the Son of man be ashamed before his Father and the angels." (Luke ix. 26; Mark viii. 38.)

6. Another hinderance is, impatiency, laziness, and favouring of the flesh. It is an ungrateful work, and for the most part maketh those our enemies that were our friends; and men cannot bear the reproaches and unthankful returns of sinners. It may be they are their chief friends on whom is all their dependence, so that it may be their undoing to displease them. Besides, it is a work that seldom succeedeth at the first, except it be followed on with wisdom and unweariedness. You must be a great while teaching an ignorant person, before he will be brought to know the very fundamentals; and a great while persuading an obstinate sinner, before he will come to a full resolution to return.[q] Now, this is a tedious course to the flesh, and few will bear it. Not considering what patience God used towards us when we were in our sins, and how long he followed us with the importunities of his Spirit, holding out Christ and life, and beseeching us to accept them. Woe to us if God had been as impatient with us as we are with others. If Christ be not weary, nor give over to invite them, we have little reason to be weary of doing the message. See 2 Tim. ii. 24, 25.

[q] Melius tumor capitis dolet cum curatur, quam dum ei parcitur, et non sanatur. Hoc est quod acutè vidit qui dixit, utiliores esse plerumque inimicos objurgantes, quam amicos objurgare metuentes. Illi dum rixantur, dicunt aliquando vera quæ corrigamus. Isti autem minorem quam oportet exhibent justitiæ libertatem, dum amicitias timent exasperare dulcedinem.—*Aug. Epist. ad Hieronym. inter opera Hieron.* tom. iii. fol. (mihi) 158.

7. Another hinderance is, self-seeking and self-minding. Men are all for themselves, and all mind their own things, but few the things of Christ and their brethren.[r] Hence is that Cainish voice, "Am I my brother's keeper?" Every man must answer for himself. Hence also it is that a multitude of ignorant professors do think only where they may enjoy the purest ordinances, and thither they will go over sea and land; or what way of discipline will be sweetest to themselves, and therefore are prone to groundless separation: but where they have the fairest opportunity to win the souls of others, or in what place or way they may do most good, these things they little or nothing regard, as if we had learned of the monks, and were setting up their principles and practice when we seem to oppose them.

If these men had tried what some of their brethren have done, they would know that all the purest ordinances and churches will not afford that solid comfort, as the converting of a few sinners by our unwearied, compassionate exhortations. Two men in a frosty season come where a company of people are ready to starve; the one of them laps himself, and taketh shelter, for fear lest he should perish with them; the other, in pity, falls to rub them that he may recover heat in them, and while he laboureth hard to help them, he getteth far better heat to himself than his unprofitable companion doth.

8. With many, also, pride is a great impediment. If it were to speak to a great man, they would do it, so it would not displease him. But to go among the poor multitude, and to take pains with a company of ignorant beggars, or mean persons, and to sit with them in a smoky, nasty cottage, and there to instruct them and exhort them from day to day, where is the person almost that will do it? Many will much rejoice if they have been instruments of converting a gentleman, (and they have good cause,) but for the common multitude, they look not after them: as if God were a respecter of the persons of the rich, or the souls of all were not alike to him. Alas! these men little consider how long Christ did stoop to us! When the God of glory comes down in flesh, to worms, and goeth preaching up and down among them from city to city! Not

[r] Phil. ii. 20. Illud est vivere, non sibi vivere solum. Bene vivere, non est quid privatum et solitarii boni. In alios effluit sensus vitæ bonæ.—*Eus. Nieremberg. de Arte Voluntatis*, lib. i. p. 94.

the silliest woman that he thought too low to confer with. Few rich, and noble, and wise, are called. It is the poor that receive the glad tidings of the Gospel. (John iv. and 1 Cor. i. 26.)

9. Lastly; With some also their ignorance of the duty doth hinder them from performing it. Either they know it not to be a duty, or at least not to be their duty. Perhaps they have not considered much of it, nor been pressed to it by their teachers, as they have been to hearing, and praying, and other duties. If this be thy case who readest this, that mere ignorance or inconsiderateness hath kept thee from it, then I am in hope now thou art acquainted with thy duty, thou wilt set upon it.

Object. 1. O, but saith one, I am of so weak parts and gifts, that I am unable to manage an exhortation, especially to men of strong natural parts and understanding.

Answ. First; Set those upon the work who are more able: Secondly, Yet do not think that thou art so excused thyself, but use faithfully that ability which thou hast, not in teaching those of whom thou shouldst learn, but in instructing those who are more ignorant than thyself, and in exhorting those who are negligent in the things which they do know. If you cannot speak well yourself, yet you can tell them what God speaketh in his word. It is not the excellency of speech that winneth souls, but the authority of God manifested by that speech, and the power of his word in the mouth of the instructer. A weak woman may tell what God saith in the plain passages of the Word, as well as a learned man. If you cannot preach to them, yet you can turn to the place in your Bible, or at least remember them of it, and say, "Thus it is written." One of mean parts may remember the wisest of their duty when they forget it. David received seasonable advice from Abigail, a woman. When a man's eyes are blinded with passion, or the deceits of the world, or the lusts of the flesh, a weak instructer may prove very profitable; for in that case he hath as much need to hear of what he knoweth, as of what he doth not know.

Object. 2. It is my superior that needeth my advice and exhortation; and is it fit for me to teach or reprove my betters? Must the wife teach the husband, of whom the Scripture biddeth them learn? Or must the child teach the parents, whose duty it is to teach them?

Answ. First, It is fit that husbands should be able to teach their wives, and parents to teach their children; and God expecteth they should be so, and therefore commandeth the infe-

riors to learn of them. But if they through their own negligence do disable themselves, or through their own wickedness do bring their souls into such misery, as that they have the greatest need of advice and reproof themselves, and are objects of pity to all that know their case; then it is themselves, and not you, that break God's order, by bringing themselves into disability and misery.

Matter of mere order and manners must be dispensed with in cases of flat necessity. Though it were your minister, you must teach him in such a case. It is the part of parents to provide for their children, and not children for their parents: and yet if the parents fall into want, must not the children relieve them? It is the part of the husband to dispose of the affairs of the family and estate; and yet, if he be sick or beside himself, must not the wife do it? The rich should relieve the poor; but if the rich fall into beggary, they must be relieved themselves. It is the work of the physician to look to the health of others; and yet, if he fall sick, somebody must help him, and look to him. So must the meanest servant admonish his master, and the child his parent, and the wife her husband, and the people their ministers, in cases of necessity.

Secondly, Yet let me give you these two cautions here.

1. That you do not pretend necessity when there is none, out of a mere desire of teaching. There is scarcely a more certain discovery of a proud heart than to be forwarder and more desirous to teach than to learn, especially toward those that are fitter to teach us.

2. And when the necessity of your superiors doth call for your advice, yet do it with all possible humility, and modesty, and meekness. Let them discern your reverence and submission to their superiority in the humble manner of your addresses to them. Let them perceive that you do it not out of a mere teaching humour, or proud self-conceitedness. An elder must be admonished, but not rebuked. If a wife should tell her husband of his sin in a masterly, railing language; or if a servant reprove his master, or a child his father, (1 Tim. v. 1,) in a saucy, disrespectful way, what good could be expected from such reproof? But if they should meekly and humbly open to him his sin and danger, and entreat him to bear with them in what God commandeth, and his misery requireth; and if they could by tears testify their sense of his case, what father, or master, or husband, could take this ill?

Object. 3. But some may say, This will make us all preachers, and cause all to break over the bounds of their callings; every boy and woman then will turn preacher.

Answ. 1. This is not taking a pastoral charge of souls, nor making an office or calling of it, as preachers do.

2. And in the way of our callings, every good Christian is a teacher, and hath a charge of his neighbour's soul. Let it be only the voice of a Cain to say, "Am I my brother's keeper?" I would have one of these men, that are so loth that private men should teach them, to tell me, what, if a man fall down in a swoon in the streets, though it be your father or superior, would you not take them up presently, and use all means you could to recover him? or would you let him lie and die, and say, 'It is the work of the physician, and not mine; I will not invade the physician's calling.' In two cases, every man is a physician. First, in case of necessity, and when a physician cannot be had. And secondly, in case the hurt be so small, that every man can do as well as the physician. And in the same two cases, every man must be a teacher.

Object. 4. Some will further object,[a] to put off this duty, that the party is so ignorant, or stupid, or careless, or rooted in sin, and hath been so oft exhorted in vain, and there is no hope.

Answ. How know you when there is no hope? Cannot God yet cure him? And must it not be by means? And have not many as far gone been cured? Should not a merciful physician use means while there is life? And is it not inhuman cruelty in you to give up your friend to the devil and damnation as hopeless, upon mere backwardness to your duty, or upon groundless discouragements? What, if you had been so given up yourself when you were ignorant?

Object. 5. But we must not cast pearls before swine, nor give that which is holy to dogs.

Answ. That is but a favourable dispensation of Christ for your own safety. When you are in danger to be torn in pieces,

[a] This is the killing pain of all our pains, that all we do is rejected. Ministers would not be gray-headed so soon, nor die so fast for all their labour, if it were but successful; but this cuts to the heart, and makes us bleed in secret, that though we do much it comes to nothing. I am placed in an hospital, where there are so many score diseased creatures, that it would pity any one's heart to look on them, and yet when I come to dress them, they all curse me in their heart; and one hides his wounds from me, and another says and swears he is as well as I, in as good a condition as his minister; and yet looks as pale as death, as black in the mouth and eyes as if he were in hell already. —*Lockier on Col.* i. 29, p. 528.

Christ would have you forbear, but what is that to you that are in no such danger? As long as they will hear, you have encouragement to speak, and may not cast them off as contemptuous swine.

Object. 6. Oh, but it is a friend that I have all my dependence on, and by telling him of his sin and misery, I may lose his love, and so be undone.

Answ. Surely no man that hath the face of a Christian, will for shame own such an objection as this. Yet, I doubt, it oft prevaileth in the heart. Is his love more to be valued than his safety? Or thy own benefit by him, than the salvation of his soul? Or wilt thou connive at his damnation, because he is thy friend? Is that thy best requital of his friendship? Hadst thou rather he should burn for ever in hell, than thou shouldst lose his favour, or the maintenance thou hast from him?

Object. 7. But I hope, though he be not regenerate and holy, that he is in no such danger.

Answ. Nay, then, if thou be one that dost not believe God's word, I have no more to say to thee. (John iii.; Heb. xii. 14.) I told you before that this unbelief was the root of all.

Sect. XVIII. To conclude this use, that I may prevail with every soul that feareth God, to use their utmost diligence to help all about them to this blessed rest which they hope for themselves, let me entreat you to consider of these following motives:

1. Consider, Nature teacheth the communicating of good, and grace doth especially dispose the soul thereunto; the neglect, therefore, of this work, is a sin both against nature and grace. He that should never seek after God himself, would quickly be concluded graceless by all: and is not he as certainly graceless that doth not labour for the salvation of others, when we are bound to love our neighbour as ourself? Would you not think that man or woman unnatural, that would let their own children or neighbours famish in the streets, while they have provision at hand? And is not he more unnatural, that will let his children or neighbours perish eternally, and will not open his mouth to save them? Certainly, this is most barbarous cruelty. Pity to the miserable is so natural, that we account an unmerciful, cruel man a very monster, to be abhorred of all. Many vicious men are too much loved in the world, but a cruel man is abhorred of all. Now, that it may appear to you what a cruel thing this neglect of souls is, do but consider of these

two things. First, How great a work it is. Secondly, And how small a matter it is that thou refusest to do for the accomplishing so great a work. First, It is to save thy brother from eternal flames, that he may not there lie roaring in endless, remediless torments. It is to bring him to the everlasting rest, where he may live in inconceivable happiness with God. Secondly, And what is it that you should do to help him herein? Why, it is to teach him, and persuade him, and lay open to him his sin, and his duty, his misery, and the remedy, till you have made him willing to yield to the offers and commands of Christ. And is this so great a matter for to do, to the attaining of such a blessed end? If God had bid you give them all your estates to win them, or lay down your lives to save them, surely you would have refused, when you will not bestow a little breath to save them? Is not the soul of a husband, or wife, or child, or neighbour, worth a few words? It is worth this, or it is worth nothing. If they did lie dying in the streets, and a few words would save their lives, would not every man say, that he were a cruel wretch that would let them perish, rather than speak to them? Even the covetous hypocrite, that James reproveth, would give a few words to the poor, and say, 'Go and be warmed, and be clothed.' What a barbarous, unmerciful wretch, then, art thou, that wilt not vouchsafe a few words of serious, sober admonition, to save the soul of thy neighbour or friend? Cruelty and unmercifulness to men's bodies, is a most damnable sin, but to their souls much more, as the soul is of greater worth than the body, and as eternity is of greater moment than this short time. Alas! you do not see or feel what case their souls are in, when they are in hell, for want of your faithful admonition. Little know you what many a soul may now be feeling, who have been your neighbours and acquaintance, and died in their sins, on whom you never bestowed one hour's sober advice for the preventing of their unhappiness. If you did know their misery, you would now do more to bring them out of hell. But, alas! it is too late, you should have done it while they were with you; it is now too late. As one said in reproach of physicians, "That they were the most happy men, because all their good deeds and cures were seen above ground to their praise, but all their mistakes and neglects were buried out of sight."[t] So I may say to you, Many a neglect of yours to the souls about you, may be now buried with those souls in hell, out of your sight and

[t] Nicocles.

hearing, and therefore now it doth not much trouble you, but, alas! they feel it, though you feel it not. May not many a papist rise up in judgment against us, and condemn us? They will give their lands and estates to have so many masses said for the souls of their deceased friends, when it is too late, to bring them out of a feigned purgatory, and we will not ply them with persuasions while we may, to save them from real threatened condemnation; though this cheaper means may prove effectual, when that dearer way of papists will do no good. Jeremy cried out, "My bowels, my bowels, I cannot hold my peace," because of a temporal destruction of his people. And do not our bowels yearn? And can we hold our peace at men's eternal destruction?

2. Consider, What a rate Christ did value souls at, and what he hath done towards the saving of them. He thought them worth his blood and sufferings, and shall not we then think them worth the breath of our mouths? Will you not set in with Christ for so good a work? Nor do a little, where he hath done so much?

3. Consider, What fit objects of pity they are. It is no small misery to be an enemy to God, unpardoned, unsanctified, strangers to the church's special privileges, without hope of salvation if they so live and die. And, which is yet more, they are dead in these their trespasses and miseries, and have not hearts to feel them, or to pity themselves. If others do not pity them, they will have no pity; for it is the nature of their disease to make them pitiless to their own souls, yea, to make them the most cruel destroyers of themselves.

4. Consider, It was once thy own case. Thou wast once a slave of Satan thyself, and confidently didst thou go in the way to condemnation. What, if thou hadst been let alone in that way, whither hadst thou gone, and what had become of thee? It was God's argument to the Israelites to be kind to strangers, because themselves were sometimes strangers in Egypt; so it may persuade you to show compassion to them that are strangers to Christ, and to the hopes and comforts of the saints, because you were once as strange to them yourselves.[u]

5. Consider, The relation that thou standest in towards them. It is thy neighbour, thy brother, whom thou art bound to be tender of, and to love as thyself. He that loveth not his brother,

[u] Hæc et nos risimus aliquando. Fiunt, non nascuntur Christiani.—*Tertul. Apolog.* cap. 18.

whom he seeth daily, most certainly doth not love God, whom he never saw: and doth he love his brother, that will stand by, and see him go to hell, and never hinder him?[x] (John iii. 10, iv. 20, 21.)

6. Consider, What a deal of guilt this neglect doth lay upon thy soul. First, Thou art guilty of the murder and damnation of all those souls whom thou dost thus neglect. He that standeth by and seeth a man in a pit, and will not pull him out if he can, doth drown him. And he that standeth by while thieves rob him, or murderers kill him, and will not help him if he can, is accessory to the fact. And so he that will silently suffer men to damn their souls, or will let Satan and the world deceive them, and not offer to help them, will certainly be judged guilty of damning them. And is not this a most dreadful consideration? Oh, sirs, how many souls, then, have every one of us been guilty of damning! What a number of our neighbours and acquaintance are dead, in whom we discerned no signs of sanctification, and we never did once plainly tell them of it, or how to be recovered! If you had been the cause but of burning a man's house through your negligence, or of undoing him in the world, or of destroying his body, how would it trouble you as long as you lived! If you had but killed a man unadvisedly, it would much disquiet you. We have known those that have been guilty of murder, that could never sleep quietly after, nor have one comfortable day, their own consciences did so vex and torment them. Oh, then, what a heart mayest thou have, that hast been guilty of murdering such a multitude of precious souls! Remember this when thou lookest thy friend or carnal neighbour in the face, and think with thyself, 'Can I find in my heart, through my silence and negligence, to be guilty of his everlasting burning in hell?' Methinks such a thought should even untie the tongue of the dumb.

2. And as you are guilty of their perishing, so are you of every sin which in the mean time they do commit. If they were converted, they would break off their course of sinning; and if you did your duty, you know not but they might be converted. As he that is guilty of a man's drunkenness, is guilty

[x] Glossa igitur Lyrani in Matt. xxv. est improbanda, ubi dicit, Considerandum etiam quod hic non fit mentio de operibus misericordiæ ex parte animæ, quia illa pertinet pro majori parte ad prælatos, ad quos pertinet alios instruere et dirigere in salutem. Obsecro te per mansuetudinem Christi, ut si te læsi, dimittas mihi; nec me vicissim lædendo, malum pro malo reddas. Lædes enim si mihi tacueris errorem meum, quem forte inveneris in scriptis, vel in dictis meis.—*Aug. Epist. ad Hier. inter opera Hieron.* tom. iii. p. (mihi) 159.

of all the sins which that drunkenness doth cause him to commit; so he that is guilty of a man's continuing unregenerate, is also guilty of the sins of his unregeneracy. How many curses and oaths, and scorns at God's ways, and other sins of most heinous nature, are many of you guilty of, that little think of it! You that live godlily, and take much pains for your own souls, and seem fearful of sinning, would take it ill of one that should tell you, that you are guilty of weekly or daily whoredoms, and drunkenness, and swearing, and lying, &c. And yet it is too true, even beyond all denial, by your neglect of helping those who do commit them.[7]

3. You are guilty also, as of the sin, so of all the dishonour that God hath thereby. And how much is that? And how tender should a Christian be of the glory of God, the least part whereof is to be valued before all our lives!

4. You are guilty, also, of all those judgments which those men's sins do bring upon the town or country where they live. I know you are not such atheists, but you believe it is God that sendeth sickness, and famine, and war; and also that it is only sin that moveth him to this indignation. What doubt, then, is there, but you are the cause of judgments, who do not strive against those sins which do cause them? God hath staid long in patience, to see if any would deal plainly with the sinners of the times, and so free their own souls from the guilt: but when he seeth that there is almost none, but all become guilty, no wonder then if he lay the judgment upon all. We have all seen the drunkards, and heard the swearers in our streets, and we would not speak to them; we have all lived in the midst of an ignorant, worldly, unholy people, and we have not spoke to them with earnestness, plainness, and love; no wonder, then, if God speak in his wrath both to them and us. Eli did not commit the sin himself, and yet he speaketh so coldly against it, that he also must bear the punishment. Guns and cannons speak against sin in England, because the inhabitants would not speak. God pleadeth with us with fire and sword, because we would not plead with sinners with our tongues. God locketh up the clouds, because we have shut up our mouths. The earth is grown as hard as iron to us, because we have hardened our hearts against our miserable neighbours. The cries of the poor for bread are loud, because our cries against sin have been so low. Sicknesses run apace from house to house, and sweep away the poor un-

[7] Qui non vetat peccare cum potest, jubet.

prepared inhabitants, because we swept not out the sin that breedeth them. When you look over the woful desolations in England, how ready are you to cry out on them that were the causers of it! But did you consider how deeply yourselves were guilty? And, as Christ said in another case, "If these should hold their peace, the stones would speak." (Luke ix. 40.) So, because we held our peace at the ignorance, ungodliness, and wickedness of our places, therefore do these plagues and judgments speak.

7. Consider, What a thing it will be to look upon your poor friends eternally in those flames, and to think that your neglect was a great cause of it! And that there was a time when you might have done much to prevent it! If you should there perish with them, it would be no small aggravation of your torment: if you be in heaven, it would surely be a sad thought, were it possible, that any sorrow could dwell there, to hear a multitude of poor souls there to cry out for ever, Oh! if you would but have told me plainly of my sin and danger, and dealt roundly with me, and set it home, I might have escaped all this torment, and been now in rest.' Oh! what a sad voice will this be!

8. Consider, What a joy it is like to be in heaven to you, to meet those there whom you have been a means to bring thither! To see their faces, and join with them for ever in the praises of God, whom ye were instruments to bring to the knowledge and obedience of Christ! What it will then be, we know not: but surely, according to our present temper, it would be no small joy.

9. Consider, How many souls have we drawn into the way of damnation, or at least hardened, or settled in it! And should we not now be more diligent to draw men to life? There is not one of us but have had our companions in sin, especially in the days of our ignorance and unregeneracy. We have enticed them, or encouraged them to Sabbath-breaking, drinking, or revellings, or dancings, and stage-plays, or wantonness and vanities, if not to scorn and oppose the godly. We cannot so easily bring them from sin again, as we did draw them to it. Many are dead already without any change discovered, who were our companions in sin. We know not how many are and will be in hell that we drew thither, and there may curse us in their torments for ever. And doth it not beseem us, then, to do as much to save men, as we

have done to destroy them; and be merciful to some as we have been cruel to others.

10. Consider, How diligent are all the enemies of these poor souls to draw them to hell! And if nobody be diligent in helping them to heaven, what is likely to become of them? The devil is tempting them day and night. Their inward lusts are still working and withdrawing them. The flesh is still pleading for its delights and profits. Their old companions are ready to entice them to sin, and to disgrace God's ways and people to them, and to contradict the doctrine of Christ that should save them, and to increase their prejudice and dislike of holiness. Seducing teachers are exceeding diligent in sowing tares, and in drawing off the unstable from the doctrine and way of life: so that when we have done all we can, and hope we have won men, what a multitude of late have, after all, been taken in this snare! And shall a seducer be so unwearied in proselyting poor, ungrounded souls to his fancies; and shall not a sound Christian be much more unwearied in labouring to win men to Christ and life?

11. Consider, The neglect of this doth very deeply wound when conscience is awaked. When a man comes to die, conscience will ask him, What good hast thou done in thy lifetime? The saving of souls is the greatest good work; what hast thou done towards this? How many hast thou dealt faithfully with? I have oft observed that the consciences of dying men do very much wound them for this omission. For my own part, to tell you my experience, whenever I have been near death, my conscience hath accused me more for this than for any sin. It would bring every ignorant profane neighbour to my remembrance, to whom I never made known their danger: it would tell me, thou shouldst have gone to them in private, and told them plainly of their desperate danger, without bashfulness or daubing, though it had been when thou shouldst have eaten or slept, if thou hadst no other time: conscience would remember me, how, at such a time or such a time, I was in company with the ignorant, or was riding by the way with a wilful sinner, and had a fit opportunity to have dealt with them, but did not; or, at least, did it by halves, and to little purpose. The Lord grant I may better obey conscience hereafter while I live and have time, that it may have less to accuse me of at death!

12. Consider, further, It is now a very seasonable time which you have for this work. Take it therefore while you have it. There are times wherein it is not safe to speak; it may cost you your liberties, or your lives: it is not so now with us. Besides, your neighbours will be here with you but a very little while: they will shortly die, and so must you. Speak to them, therefore, while you may; set upon them, and give them no rest till you have prevailed. Do it speedily, for it must be now or never. A Roman emperor, when he heard of a neighbour dead, he asked, "And what did I do for him before he died?" and it grieved him that a man should die near him; and it could not be said that he had first done him any good. Methinks you should think of this when you hear that any of your neighbours are dead; but I had far rather, while they are alive, you would ask the question: There is such and such a neighbour (alas, how many!) that are ignorant and ungodly, what have I done, or said, that might have in it any likelihood of recovering them? They will shortly be dead, and then it is too late.

13. Consider, This is a work of greatest charity, and yet such as every one of you may perform. If it were to give them monies, the poor have it not to give: if to fight for them, the weak cannot: if it were to suffer, the fearful will say, they cannot: but every one hath a tongue to speak to a sinner. The poorest may be thus charitable as well as the rich.

14. Consider, also, The happy consequences of this work, where it is faithfully done. To name some:

1. You may be instrumental in that blessed work of saving souls, a work that Christ came down and died for, a work that the angels of God rejoice in; for, saith the Holy Ghost, "If any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." (James v. 19, 20.) And how can God more highly honour you, than to make you instruments in so great a work?

2. Such souls will bless you here and hereafter. They may be angry with you at first; but if your words prevail and succeed, they will bless the day that ever they knew you, and bless God that sent you to speak to them.

3. If you succeed, God will have much glory by it;[s] he will

[s] As it is a grievous thing to think of a place wherein God hath been truly worshipped, that afterwards the devil should be served there; so it is a comfortable thing to think of other places wherein the devil hath been served, that God is now truly worshipped there.—*Burroughs on Hos.* i. p. 118.

have one more to value and accept of his Son, of whom Christ's blood hath attained its end: he will have one more to love him and daily worship and fear him, and to do him service in his church.

4. The church also will have gain by it; there will be one less provoker of wrath, and one more to strive with God against sin and judgment, and to engage against the sins of the times, and to win others by doctrine and example. If thou couldst but convert one persecuting Saul, he might become a Paul, and do the church more service than ever thou didst thyself. However, the healing of sinners is the surest method for preventing or removing of judgments.

5. It is the way also to purity and flourishing of the church, and to the right erecting and executing the discipline of Christ; if men would but do what they ought with their neighbours in private, what a help would it be to the success of the public endeavours of the ministry! And what hope might we have that daily some would be added to the church! And if any be obstinate, yet this is the first course that must be taken to reclaim them. Who dare separate from them, or excommunicate them, before they have been first thoroughly admonished and instructed in private, according to Christ's rule? (Matt. xviii. 15, 16.)

6. It bringeth much advantage to yourselves: First, It will increase your graces, both as it is a course that God will bless, and as it is an acting of them in this persuading of others: he that will not let you lose a cup of water which is given for him, will not let you lose these greater works of charity; besides those that have practised this duty most conscionably, do find, by experience, that they never go on more speedily and prosperously towards heaven than when they do most to help others thither with them. It is not here as with worldly treasure, the more you give away, the less you have; but here, the more you give, the more you have. The setting forth Christ in his fulness to others, will warm your own hearts and stir up your love. The opening of the evil and danger of sin to others, will increase your hatred of it, and much engage yourselves against it. Secondly, And it seemeth that it will increase your glory as well as your grace, both as a duty which God will so reward, "for those that convert many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever;" (Dan. xii. 3, and xi. 33;) and also as we shall there behold them in heaven,

and be their associates in blessedness, whom God made us here the instruments to convert. Thirdly, However, it will give us much peace of conscience, whether we succeed or not, to think that we were faithful, and did our best to save them, and that we are clear from the blood of all men, and their perishing shall not lie upon us. Fourthly, Besides, that it is a work that, if it succeed, doth exceedingly rejoice an honest heart. He that hath a sense of God's honour, or the least affection to the soul of his brother, must needs rejoice much at his conversion, whosoever be the instrument, but especially when God maketh ourselves the means of so blessed a work. If God make us the instruments of any temporal good, it is very comfortable, but much more of eternal good.[a] There is naturally a rejoicing followeth every good work answerable to the degree of its goodness: he that doth most good, hath usually the most happy and comfortable life. If men knew the pleasure that there is in doing good, they would not seek after their pleasure so much in evil. For my own part, it is an unspeakable comfort to me, that God hath made me an instrument for the recovering of so many from bodily diseases, and saving their natural lives;[b] but all this is yet nothing to the comfort I have in the success of my labours, in the conversion and confirmation of souls; it is so great a joy to me that it drowneth the

[a] Si itaque qui multorum corporibus sanitatem medendo perpererit, vel ad majorem hæc deduxerit valetudinem, haudquaquam id sine divino instinctu fecisse videbitur; quanto magis qui plurimorum animas curat, et ad meliora traducit; et ex Deo qui omnibus præest, ut pendeant, facit; edocetque ut ad ejus voluntatem quæcunque gesserint; ut repetant homines; declinentque vel minima quæque quæ illum factis, dictisve et cogitatione offendunt.—*Origen. cont. Celsum*, lib. i.

[b] I know many learned physicians speak very sharply against ministers practising physic. But with these conditions no wise man disalloweth it. 1. That it hinder not his main employment much. 2. That it be in case of absolute necessity, that the party must die else in the eye of reason. As 1. When no able physician is within reach. 2. Or cannot, or will not come. 3. Or the case is sudden, or the party so poor that he cannot pay physicians. 4. And if a man, being conscious of his insufficiency, resolves not to go beyond his knowledge, but rather to do too little than too much. 5. And if he take nothing for what he doth, who can blame a man that observes these conditions? Except he would have a man guilty of murder, and not help a man if he fall down by us, because we are no physicians! Et omnes has ipse conditiones observavi. If physicians may be able in divinity, as to their honour many have been—as Curæus, Vadianus, Erastus, Peucerus, Camerarius, Scaliger, Gesner, Shegkius, Zingerus, &c.—why then may not a divine as well understand physic? And Dr. Primrose (de Errorib. Vulg. c. 4. lib. i.) might have remembered more divines than Marsil. Ficinus that were physicians, as Fragus, Ingolsteterus, Lemnius, &c.

painfulness of my daily duties, and the trouble of my daily languishing, and bodily griefs; and maketh all these, with all oppositions and difficulties in my work, to be easy and as nothing. And of all the personal mercies that ever I received, next to his love in Christ and to my soul, I must most joyfully bless him for the plenteous success of my endeavours upon others. Oh, what fruit, then, might I have seen, if I had been more faithful, and plied the work in private and public as I ought! I know we have need to be very jealous of our deceitful hearts in this point, lest our rejoicing should come from our pride and self-ascribing. Naturally we would, every man, be in the place of God, and have the praise of every good work ascribed to ourselves, but yet, to imitate our Father in goodness and mercy, and to rejoice in that degree we attain to, is the part of every child of God. I tell you therefore, to persuade you from my own experience, that if you did but know what a joyful thing it is to be an instrument for the converting and saving of souls, you would set upon it presently, and follow it night and day through the greatest discouragements and resistance. Fifthly, I might also tell you of the honourableness of this work; but I will pass by that, lest I excite your pride instead of your zeal.

And thus I have showed you what should move and persuade you to this duty. Let me now conclude with a word of entreaty. First, To all the godly in general. Secondly, To some above others in particular, to set upon the conscionable performance of this most excellent work.

CHAP. XIV.

An Advice to some more specially to help others to this Rest, pressed largely on Ministers and Parents.

Sect. I. Up, then, every man that hath a tongue, and is a servant of Christ, and do something of this your Master's work. Why hath he given you a tongue but to speak in his service? And how can you serve him more eminently, than in the saving of souls? He that will pronounce you blessed at the last day, and sentence you to the kingdom prepared for you, because you fed him, and clothed him, and visited him, &c., in his members, will surely pronounce you blessed for so great a work as is the bringing over of souls to his kingdom, and helping to drive the match betwixt them and him. He that saith, "The poor you

have always with you," hath left the ungodly always with you, that you might still have matter to exercise your charity upon. Oh, if you have the hearts of Christians, or of men in you, let them yearn towards your poor, ignorant, ungodly neighbours. Alas! there is but a step betwixt them and death and hell; many hundred diseases are waiting ready to seize on them, and if they die unregenerate, they are lost for ever. Have you hearts of rock, that cannot pity men in such a case as this? If you believe not the word of God, and the danger of sinners, why are you Christians yourselves? If you do believe it, why do you not bestir you to the helping of others? Do you not care who is damned, so you be saved? If so, you have as much cause to pity yourselves; for it is a frame of spirit utterly inconsistent with grace. Should you not rather say, as the lepers of Samaria, Is it not a day of glad tidings, and do we sit still, and hold our peace? (1 Kings vii. 9.) Hath God had so much mercy on you, and will you have no mercy on your poor neighbours? You need not go far to find objects for your pity. Look but into your streets, or into the next house to you, and you will probably find some. Have you never an ignorant and unregenerate neighbour that sets his heart below, and neglecteth eternity? Oh, what blessed place do you live in, where there is none such. If there be not some of them in thine own family, it is well; and yet art thou silent? Dost thou live close by them, or meet them in the streets, or labour with them, or travel with them, or sit still and talk with them, and say nothing to them of their souls, or the life to come? If their houses were on fire, thou wouldst run and help them; and wilt thou not help them when their souls are almost at the fire of hell? If thou knewest but a remedy for their diseases, thou wouldst tell it them, or else thou wouldst judge thyself guilty of their death. Cardan[c] speaks of one that had a receipt that would suddenly and certainly dissolve the stone in the bladder; and he concludes of him, that he makes no doubt but that man is in hell, because he never revealed it to any before he died. What shall we say, then, of them that know of the remedy for curing souls, and do not reveal it; nor persuade men to make use of it? Is it not hypocrisy to pray daily for their conversion and salvation, and never once endeavour to procure it? And is it not hypocrisy to pray, "that God's name may be hallowed," and never to endeavour to bring men

[c] Non dubito quin iste sit apud inferos, quod moriens artem suam mortalibus inviserit. Vide Jo. Van. 'De Lithiasi,' c. vii. p. 123.

to hallow it, nor hinder them from profaning it? And can you pray "Let thy kingdom come," and yet never labour for the coming or increase of that kingdom? Is it no grief to your hearts to see the kingdom of Satan so to flourish, and to see him lead captive such a multitude of souls? You take on you that you are soldiers in Christ's army, and will you do nothing against his prevailing enemies? You pray also daily, "that his will may be done;" and should you not daily, then, persuade men to do it, and dissuade them from sinning against it? You pray, "that God would forgive them their sins, and that he would not lead them into temptation, but deliver them from evil;" and yet will you not help them against temptations, nor help to deliver them from the greatest evil. Nor help them to repent and believe, that they may be forgiven. Alas! that your prayers and your practice should so much disagree! Look about you, therefore, Christians, with an eye of compassion on the ignorant ungodly sinners about you; be not like the priest or Levite who saw the man wounded, and passed by. God did not so pass by you, when it was your own case. Are not the souls of your neighbours fallen into the hands of Satan? Doth not their misery cry out to you, Help! help! As you have any compassion towards men in the greatest misery, help! As you have the hearts of men, and not of tigers in you, help! Alas! how forward are hypocrites in their sacrifice, and how backward to show mercy! How much in praying, and duties of worship, and how little in plain reproof and exhortation, and other duties of compassion! And yet God hath told them, "that he will have mercy, and not sacrifice;" that is, mercy before sacrifice. And how forward are these hypocrites to censure ministers for neglecting their duties! Yea, to expect more duty from one minister, than ten can perform! And yet they make no conscience of neglecting their own. Nay, how forward are they to separate from those about them! And how censorious against those that admit them to the Lord's supper, or that join with them! And yet will they not be brought to deal with them in Christ's way for their recovery: as if other men were to work, and they only to sit by and judge. Because they know it is a work of trouble, and will many times set men against them, therefore no persuasion will bring them to it. They are like men that see their neighbour sick of the plague, or drowning in the water, or taken captive by the enemy, and they dare not venture to relieve him themselves: but none so forward

to put on others. So are these men the greatest expecters of duty, and the least performers.

Sect. II. But as this duty lieth upon all in general, so upon some more especially, according as God hath called or qualified them thereto. To them, therefore, more particularly I will address my exhortation, whether they be such as have more opportunity and advantages for this work, or such as have better abilities to perform it, or such as have both. And these are of several sorts.

1. All you that God hath given more learning and knowledge to, and endued with better parts for utterance than your neighbours, God expecteth this duty especially at your hand. The strong are made to help the weak, and those that see must direct the blind. God looketh for this faithful improvement of your parts and gifts, which if you neglect, it were better for you that you never had received them: for they will but further your condemnation, and be as useless to your own salvation, as they were to others.

Sect. III. 2. All those that have special familiarity[d] with some ungodly men, and that have interest in them, God looks for this duty at their hands. Christ himself did eat and drink with publicans and sinners, but it was only to be their physician, and not their companion. Who knows but God gave you interest in them to this end, that you might be the means of their recovery? They that will not regard the words of another, will regard a brother, or sister, or husband, or wife, or near friend; besides, that the bond of friendship doth engage you to more kindness and compassion than ordinary.

Sect. IV. 3. Physicians that are much about dying men, should, in a special manner, make conscience of this duty: they have a treble advantage. First, They are at hand. Secondly, They are with men in sickness and dangers, when the ear is more open, and the heart less stubborn than in time of health. He that made a scorn of godliness before, will then be of another mind, and hear counsel then, if ever he will hear it. Thirdly, Besides, they look upon their physician as a man in whose hand is their life; or at least may do much to save them, and therefore they will the more regardfully hear his advice. Oh, therefore, you that are of this honourable profession, do not think this a work beside your calling; as if it belonged to none but ministers,

[d] Habes socios ac necessarios? Non poteris rite aliorum delecta castigare, si ad horum errata connivere volueris.—*Muscul. in Matt.* vii. tom. i. p. 174.

except you think it beside your calling to be compassionate, or to be Christians. Oh, help, therefore, to fit your patients for heaven, and whether you see they are for life or death, teach them both how to live and to die, and give them some physic for their souls, as you do for their bodies. Blessed be God that very many of the chief physicians of this age, have, by their eminent piety, vindicated their profession from the common imputation of atheism and profaneness.

Sect. V. 4. Another sort that have excellent advantages for this duty,[e] is, men that have wealth and authority, and are of great place and command in the world, especially that have many that live in dependence on them. Oh, what a world of good might gentlemen, and knights, and lords, do, that have a great many tenants, and that are the leaders of the country, if they had but hearts to improve their interest and advantage![f] Little do

[e] Pestifera vis est valere ad nocendum; illius magnitudo stabilis fundataque est, quem omnes tam supra se esse, quam pro se sciunt: cujus curam excubare pro salute singulorum atque universorum quotidie experiuntur; quo procedente, non tanquam malum aliquod aut noxium animal è cubili prosilierit, diffugiunt; sed tanquam ad clarum sidus certatim advolant.—*Seneca de Clementia*, lib. i. c. 3.

[f] What a horrid thing is it, that usually none are greater enemies to, and hinderers of, Christ's kingdom and work, than those that, 1. By office, and 2. By the greatness of their talents of riches, power, and honour, are most deeply engaged to Christ! Even Jehu, that pretended to reformation, and destroyed the worship and priests of Baal, and said, "Come and see my zeal for the Lord," and rises up against Ahab for his persecutions and idolatry; yet, when the government falls into his hands, persists in the steps of him whom he destroyed, thereby adjudging himself to destruction; and all because when he had espoused the same interest, he thinks himself necessitated to take the same course! O how Christ will come upon these hypocrites in his fury, and dash them in pieces, like a potter's vessel, and bruise them with his rod of iron, and make them know that he will reign in his holy hill, Zion! Will not kings yet be wise, nor the judges of the earth be learned; to kiss the Son lest he be angry, and they perish? Will they break his bonds, and confederate against his government, and be jealous of it and his ministers, as if Christ's government and theirs could not both stand? How long will they set their interest before and against Christ's interest, and bend their studies to keep it under, and call his government tyranny, and their subjection slavery? Do they not know how much Christ's interest hath been taken down, upon mere pretended necessity of setting up their own? Will their religious hypocrisy secure them from his burning wrath, when he shall say, "These mine enemies that would not I should reign over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me?" I entreat them (if they be not past teaching) to read what a moderate divine saith, even Junius de Communione Sanct., especially the fifth chapter of his Ecclesiastes, of the power of the magistrate in church affairs. O let all Christians pray daily, "Lead us not into temptation." I will not trust my brother if he be once exalted, and in the way of temptation.

you that are such, think of the duty that lies upon you in this: Have you not all your honour and riches from God? And is it not evident, then, that you must employ them for the best advantage of his service? Do you not know who hath said, "that to whom men commit much, from them they will expect the more?"

You have the greatest opportunities to do good, of most men in the world. Your tenants dare not contradict you, lest you dispossess them or their children of their habitations. They fear you more than they do God himself; your frown will do more with them, than the threatenings of the Scripture; they will sooner obey you, than God. If you speak to them for God and their souls, you may be regarded, when even a minister that they fear not, shall be despised. If they do but see you favour the way of godliness, they will lightly counterfeit it, at least, to please you, especially if they live within the reach of your observation. Oh, therefore, as you value the honour of God, your own comfort, and the salvation of souls, improve your interest to the utmost for God. Go visit your tenants and neighbours' houses, and see whether they worship God in their families, and take all opportunities to press them to their duties. Do not despise them because they are poor or simple. Remember, God is no respecter of persons; your flesh is of no better metal than theirs; nor will the worms spare your faces or hearts any more than theirs; nor will your bones or dust bear the badge of your gentility; you must be all equals when you stand in judgment; and, therefore, help the soul of a poor man, as well if he were a gentleman. And let men see that you excel others as much in piety, heavenliness, compassion, and diligence in God's work, as you do in riches and honour in the world.

I confess you are like to be singular if you take this course; but then remember, you shall be singular in glory, for few great, and mighty, and noble, are called.

Sect. VI. 5. Another sort that have special opportunity to this work of helping others to heaven, is, the ministers of the Gospel. As they have, or should have more ability than others, so it is the very work of their calling, and every one expecteth it at their hands, and will better submit to their teaching than to others. I intend not these instructions so much to teachers as to others, and therefore I shall say but little to them; and if all, or most ministers among us, were as faithful and diligent as

some, I would say nothing. But, because it is otherwise, let me give these two or three words of advice to my brethren in this office.

1. Be sure that the recovering and saving of souls be the main end of your studies and preaching. (Acts xx. and xxvi. 18.) O do not propound any low and base ends to yourselves. This is the end of your calling, let it be also the end of your endeavours. God forbid that you should spend a week's study to please the people, or to seek the advancing of your own reputation. Dare you appear in the pulpit on such a business,[g] and speak for yourselves, when you are sent, and pretend to speak for Christ? Dare you spend that time, and wit, and parts, for yourselves? And waste the Lord's-day in seeking applause, which God hath set apart for himself. Oh, what notorious sacrilege is this! Set out the work of God as skilfully and adornedly as you can, but still let the winning of souls be your end, and let all your studies and labours be serviceable thereto. Let not the window be so painted as to keep out the light, but always judge *that* the best means that most conduceth to the end. Do not think that God is best served by a neat,[h] starched, laced oration; but that he is the able, skilful minister, that is best skilled in the art of instructing, convincing, persuading, and so winning of souls; and that is the best sermon that is best in these. When you once grow otherwise minded, and seek not God but yourselves, God will make you the basest and most contemptible of men, as you make yourselves the most sinful and wretched. Hath not this brought down the ministry of England once already? It is true of your reputation, as Christ saith of your lives, "They that will save them, will lose them." Oh! let the vigour, also, of your persuasions show that you are sensible on how weighty a business you are sent. Oh! preach with that seriousness and fervour as men that believe their own doctrine, and that know their hearers must either be prevailed with, or be damned. What you would do to save them from everlasting burning, that do while you have the opportunity and price in your hand;

[g] Magna sapientia et pietas est, dicere ad juventutem et populum necessaria, non subtilia aut arguta, ut Curæus, vid. relique in ejus vita per Mel. Adam. in vit. Germ. Medicor. p. 215. Philosophers are children, till Christ makes them men, saith Clemen. Alexand. Stromat. lib. i.

[h] Quis accurate loquitur, nisi qui vult putide loqui? Qualis sermo meus esset si una sederemus, aut ambularemus, illaboratus et facilis; tales esse epistolas meas volo, quæ nihil habeant accersitum nec fictum; si fieri posset, quid sentiam, ostendere quam loqui mallem.—*Seneca*, Ep. 75.

that people may discern that you are in good sadness, and mean as you speak; and that you are not stage-players, but preachers of the doctrine of salvation. Remember what Cicero saith, "that if the matter be ever so combustible, yet, if you put not fire to it, it will not burn." And what Erasmus saith, "that a hot iron will pierce, when a cold one will not." And if the wise men of the world account you mad, say as Paul,[1] "If we are beside ourselves, it is to God." And remember that Christ was so busy in doing of good, that his friends themselves begun to lay hands on him, thinking he had been beside himself. (Mark iii.)

Sect. VII. 2. The second and chief word of advice that I would give you, is this: Do not think that all your work is in your studies, and in the pulpit.[k] I confess that is great; but, alas! it is but a small part of your task. You are shepherds, and must know every sheep, and what is their disease, and mark their strayings, and help to cure them, and fetch them home.

If the paucity of ministers in great congregations (which is the great unobserved mischief in England that cries for reformation) did not make it a thing impossible in many places, I should charge the ministers of England with most notorious unfaithfulness, for neglecting so much the rest of their work, which calleth for their diligence as much as public preaching. O learn of Paul, (Acts xx. 19, 20, 31,) to preach publicly, and from house to house, night and day with tears. Let there not be a soul in your charge that shall not be particularly instructed and watched over. Go from house to house daily, and inquire how they grow in knowledge and holiness, and on what grounds they build their hopes of salvation; and whether they walk uprightly, and perform the duties of their several relations, and

[1] Amlingus was much used to that saying, when he was reproached for his zeal—"Si insanimus, Deo insanimus."

[k] Nihil potius esse debet curæ episcopo, quam incolumitas gregis sibi crediti; —quo fit ut in civitate hoc sit episcopus, quod in nave gubernator, in curru rector, in exercitu dux; utpote cujus, ut ait Cyprianus, quantum perniciosum est ad sequentium lapsum ruina, tantum contra utile est et salutare cum se per firmamentum religionis, fratribus præbet imitandum. Væ igitur episcopis, siqui sint muneris hujus obliti, &c. Episcopi est regere ecclesiam, concionari, populum verbo Dei pascere, baptizare, et baptizatos confirmare, ordinibus sacris initiare ministros Dei, obire, circumire, circumspicere sæpius suam provinciam, &c. ut cognoscant quo statu sint fratres, et sublatis erroribus siqui irrepsissent in hominum mentes, religio non violetur. Cæterum olim episcopi vocabantur presbyteri, teste non uno in loco Hieronym.: præcipue in Epist. ad Evagrium.—*Polydor. Virgil. de Invent. Rerum*, lib. iv. c. 6. pp. (mihi) 240, 241.

use the means to increase their abilities. See whether they daily worship God in their families; and set them in a way, and teach them how to do it: confer with them about the doctrines and practice of religion, and how they receive and profit by public teaching, and answer all their carnal objections; keep in familiarity with them, that you may maintain your interest in them, and improve all your interest for God. See that no seducers do creep in amongst them, or if they do, be diligent to countermine them; and preserve your people from infection of heresies and schisms; or if they be infected, be diligent to procure their recovery; not with passion and lordliness, but with patience and condescension: as Musculus did by the Anabaptists, visiting them in prison, where the magistrate had cast them, and there instructing and relieving them; and though they reviled him when he came, and called him a false prophet, and anti-christian seducer that thirsted for their blood, yet he would not so leave them, till at last by his meekness and love he had overcome them, and recovered many to the truth, and to unity with the church.

Have a watchful eye upon each particular sheep in your flock: do not do as the lazy separatists, that gather a few of the best together, and take them only for their charge, leaving the rest to sink or swim, and giving them over to the devil and their lusts; and except it be by a sermon in the pulpit, scarce ever endeavouring their salvation, nor once looking what becomes of them. O let it not be so with you! If any be weak in the faith, receive him, but not to doubtful disputations. (Rom. xiv. 1.) If any be too careless of their duties, and too little savour the things of the Spirit, let them be pitied, and not neglected: if any walk scandalously and disorderly, deal with them for their recovery, with all diligence and patience, and set before them the heinousness and danger of their sin; if they prove obstinate after all, then avoid them, and cast them off: but do not so cruelly as to unchurch them by hundreds and by thousands, and separate from them as so many pagans, and that before any such means have been used for their recovery. If they be ignorant, it may be your fault as well as theirs; and however, they are fitter to be instructed than rejected, except they absolutely refuse to be taught. Christ will give you no thanks for keeping or putting out such from his school that are unlearned, when their desire or will is to be taught. I confess, it is easier to shut out the ignorant, than to bestow our pains night and day in teaching them; but woe to such

slothful, unfaithful servants. (Matt. xxiv. 45, 46.) Who then is a faithful and a wise servant, whom his Lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them their meat in due season, according to every one's age and capacity? Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing. O be not asleep while the wolf is waking![1] Let your eye be quick in observing the dangers and strayings of your people. If jealousies, heart-burnings, or contentions arise among them, quench them before they break out into raging, unresistible flames. As soon as you discern any to turn worldly, or proud, or factious, or self-conceited, or disobedient, or cold, and slothful in his duty; delay not, but presently make out for his recovery: remember how many are losers in the loss of a soul.

Sect. VIII. 3. Do not daub, or deal slightly with any; some will not tell their people plainly of their sins, because they are great men, and some because they are godly, as if none but the poor and the wicked should plainly be dealt with; do not you so, but reprove them sharply, though differently, and with wisdom, that they may be sound in the faith. When the Palsgrave chose Pitiscus for his household chaplain, he charged him, That without fear he should discharge his duty, and freely admonish him of his faults, as the Scriptures do require. Such encouragement from great ones, would embolden ministers, and free themselves from the unhappiness of sinning unreproved. If gentlemen would give no more thanks to Doegs, and accusers of the ministers, than Wigandus's prince did to that flattering lawyer who accused him for speaking to princes too plainly, they should learn quickly to be silent, when they had been forced as Haman's themselves, to clothe Mordecai, and set him in honour.[m] However, God doth sufficiently encourage us to deal plainly; He hath bid us speak and fear not; He hath promised to stand by us, and He will be our security; He may suffer us to be *anathema secundum dici* (as Bucholcer said), but *non secundum esse:* He will keep us, as he did Huss's

[1] The butcher and shepherd do both look on the sheep, but not both to one end, saith Clem. Alex. Stromat.

[m] Poor Zegedine suffered many years' captivity in misery and irons by the Turks, for one word in a sermon, which distasted a woman, without the least cause. As Latimer saith, "We cannot say to great sinners, *Væ vobis*, but we shall be called *Coram nobis*." This I know and dare avow, that the highest mystery in the divine rhetoric, is to feel what a man speaks, and then to speak what he felt, saith our excellent, judicious, pious, Doctor Stoughton.—*Preachers' Dig.* Serm. 2. p. 312. Lege Knoxi Orationem ante Obitum ad Symmystas et Presbyteros.

heart from the power of fire, though they did beat it, when they found it among the ashes; they may burn our bones, as Bucer's and Fagius's; or they may raise lies of us when we are dead, as of Luther, Calvin, and Œcolampadius; but the soul feeleth not this, that is rejoicing with his Lord; in the mean time let us be as well learned in the art of suffering (as Xenophon) as they are in the art of reproaching: I had rather hear from the mouth of Balak, "God hath kept thee from honour;" or from Ahab, "Feed him with the bread and water of affliction;" or from Amaziah, "Art thou made of the king's council? forbear, why shouldst thou be smitten?" than to hear conscience say, 'Thou hast betrayed souls to damnation by thy cowardice and silence;' or to hear God say 'Their blood will I require at thy hands;' or to hear from Christ the judge, "Cast the unprofitable servant into utter darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth;" yea, or to hear these sinners cry out against me in eternal fire, and with implacable rage to charge me with their undoing. (Numb. xxii. 11; 1 Kings xxii. 27; 2 Chron. xxv. 16; Ezek. iii. 18, 20, and xxxiii. 8; Matt. xxv. 30.)

And as you must be plain and serious, so labour to be skilful and discreet, that the manner may somewhat answer the excellency of the matter. How oft have I heard a stammering tongue, with ridiculous expressions, vain repetitions, tedious circumlocutions, and unseemly pronunciation, to spoil most precious spiritual doctrine, and make the hearers either loathe it, or laugh at it! How common are these extremes in the ministers of England! That while one spoils the food of life by affectation, and new-fashioned mincing, and pedantic toys, either setting forth a little and mean matter with a great deal of froth, and gaudy dressing; so that there is more of the shell or paring than of the meat: [n] or like children's babies, that when you have taken

[n] Non tam eleganter dicentes, quam utilia docentes sunt audiendi, inquit Zeno Citti. Gibieuf. saith (out of Aquin. i. p. q. 217.) "that a teacher is to the learner as a physician to his patient. And as the physician himself gives not health, but only gives some helps to bring the body into a fit temperament and disposition, that is, to help nature; so a teacher doth not give knowledge, but the helps and motives by which natural light, being excited and helped, may get knowledge. And as he is the best physician that doth not oppress nature with multitude of medicines, but pleasantly with a few doth help it, for the recovery of health; so he is the best teacher, not that knoweth how to heap up many mediums and arguments to force the understanding rather than entice it by the sweetness of light; but he, that by the easy and grateful mediums which are within reach, or fitted to our light, doth lead men as by the hand unto the truth, in the beholding or sight of which truth only knowledge

away the dressing, you have taken away all; or else hiding excellent truths in a heap of vain rhetoric, and deforming its naked beauty with their paintings, so that no more seriousness can be perceived in their sermons, than in a schoolboy's declamations: and our people are brought to hear sermons, as they do stage-plays, because ministers behave themselves but as the actors: on the other side, how many by their slovenly dressing, and the uncleanness of the dish that it is served up in, do make men loathe and nauseate the food of life, and even despise and cast up that which should nourish them! Such novices are admitted into the sacred function, to the hardening of the wicked, the saddening of the godly, and the disgrace and wrong of the work of the Lord; and those that are not able to speak sense or reason, are made the ambassadors of the most high God.

I know, our style must not be the same with different auditories: our language must not only be suited to our matter, but also to our hearers, or else the best sermon may be the worst; we must not read the highest books to the lowest form: therefore was Luther wont to say, that "Qui pueriliter, populariter, trivialiter, et simplicissime docent, optimi ad vulgus sunt concionatores:" but yet it is a poor sermon that hath nothing but words and noise. Every reasonable soul hath both judgment and affection; and every rational, spiritual sermon must have both. A discourse that hath judgment without affection is dead, and ineffectual; and that which hath affection without judgment is mad and transporting: remember the proverb, "Non omnes qui habent citharam, sunt citharœdi," Every man is not a musician that hath an instrument, or that can jangle it, and make a noise on it: and that other proverb,[o] "Multi sunt qui boves stimulant, pauci aratores," Many can prick the oxen, but few can plough; so, many preachers can talk loud and earnestly, but few can guide their flock aright, or open to them solidly the mysteries of the Gospel, and show the true mean between the extremes of contrary errors: I know both must be done; holding the plough without driving the oxen, doth

doth consist, and not in use of arguments; and therefore arguments are called reasons, by a name of relation to truth, viz., because they are means for finding out the truth."—*Gibieuf. Prefat. de Libertat.* lib. ii. p. 282. I judge this an excellent useful observation for all teachers and disputants.

[o] 2 Tim. ii. 15. Futurus pastor ecclesiæ talis eligatur, ad cujus comparationem recte grex cæteri nominentur. Definiunt rhetores oratorem, qui sit vir bonus, dicendi peritus.—*Hieron. ad Ocean.* tom. iii. p. (mihi) 147.

nothing; and driving without holding, maketh mad work, and is worse than nothing: but yet remember, that every ploughboy can drive; but to guide is more difficult, and therefore belongeth to the master-workman: the violence of the natural motion of the winds can drive on the ship; but there is necessary a rational motion to guide and govern it, or else it will quickly be on the rocks and shelves, either broke or sunk, and had better lie still in the harbour, at an anchor; the horses that have no reason, can set the coach or cart a-going, but if there be not some that have reason to guide them, it were better stand still. Oh, therefore, let me bespeak you, my brethren, in the name of the Lord, especially those that are more young and weak, that you tremble at the greatness of this holy employment, and run not up into a pulpit as boldly as into the market-place; study and pray, pray and study, till you are become workmen that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth, that your people may not be ashamed, or weary to hear you; but that besides your clear unfolding of the doctrine of the Gospel, you may also be masters of your people's affections, and may be as potent in your divine rhetoric, as Cicero in his human, who, as it is said, while he pleaded for Ligarius, "Arma de imperatoris quantumvis irati manu excusserit, et misero supplici veniam impetrarit;" or, as it is said of excellent Bucholcer,[p] that he never went up into the pulpit, but he raised in men almost what affections he pleased: so raising the dejected, and comforting the afflicted, and strengthening the tempted, that though it were two hours before he had done, yet not any, even of the common people, were weary of hearing him. Set before your eyes such patterns as these,[q] and labour with unwearied diligence to be like them. To this end take

[p] Bucholcerus in rostra sua et mediæ conscionis suggestum nunquam ascendit, quin de cordibus hominum ipsis quos fere vellet affectus excuteret. Templum ingrediebatur quis, sensu iræ divinæ perterritus? Deum immortalem! Quanta fidei voluptate perfusus domum redibat? Calamitatum angore et tentationum fluctibus quassabatur alius? Non doloris tantum alleviationem, sed propositum etiam sibi ingenerari sentiebat mala quæque forti constantique animo perferendi. Erat omni vitiorum cœna contaminatus aliquis? Flexanima orationis hujus suada nisi plane desperatus esset, corrigebatur. Vivida nimirum in Bucholcero omnia fuerunt, vivida vox, vividi oculi, vividæ manus, gestus omnes vividi; adeo sese in illo divini spiritus virtutes conseruere. Hinc auditorium ejus ita commotum orationem Bucholceri constat, ut, licet non nisi finita hora altera perorarit, nullum tamen audiendi tædium, vel è media cuiquam plebe obrepserit.—*Melch. Adamus in Vita Bucholceri.*

[q] In time, and by labour, the truth will shine forth to you, if you light on a good helper or guide.—*Clem. Alex. Strom.* lib. i.

Demosthenes' counsel, "Plus olei quam vini absumere." It is a work that requireth your most serious, searching thoughts. Running, hasty, easy studies, bring forth blind births. When you are the most renowned doctors in the church of God, alas, how little is it that you know, in comparison of all that which you are ignorant of![r] Content not yourselves to know what is the judgment of others, as if that were to know the truth in its evidence; give not over your studies when you know what the orthodox hold, and what is the opinion of the most esteemed divines; though I think while you are novices,[s] and learners yourselves, you may do well to take much upon trust from the more judicious; yet stop not there; but know, that such faith is more borrowed than your own: an implicit faith in matters, not fundamental, and of great difficulty, is ofttimes commendable, yea, and necessary in your people, who are but scholars; but in you that are masters and teachers, it is a reproach.

Sect. IX. 4. Be sure that your conversation be teaching as well as your doctrine. Do not contradict and confute your own doctrine by your practice.[t] Be as forward in a holy and hea-

[r] Communes enim sensus simplicitas ipsa commendat, et compassio sententiarum et familiaritas opinionum, &c. Ratio autem divina in medulla est, non in superficie, et plerumque æmula manifestis.—*Tertullian. Lib. de Resurrect. Carnis*, cap. 3. p. 407.

[s] Eruditio, ait Metrocles, tempore emenda est. Ideo Thales dixit tempus omnium sapientissimum est. Therefore trust not too soon to the judgment of a young divine, any more than to a young lawyer or physician. Though I know many are old ignorants too.

[t] Let presbyters be simple, merciful to all, converting all from error, visiting all that are sick, not neglecting the widows, the orphans, and the poor, but always providing things good before God and men; abstain from all anger, from unjust judgment, and be far from all covetousness. Do not hastily consent against any man; do not prevaricate in judgment; be zealous after that which is good, keeping yourselves from scandals and false brethren, and those that bear the name of the Lord in hypocrisy, and who lead empty men into error.—*Polycarpus in Ep. ad Philip. edit. Usserii*, pp. 19, 20. It seems it was the office and work of presbyters to be judges in Polycarp's time, who was John's disciple, and the people's duty to obey them, as it is expressed in the words before these. Lucrum philosophiæ est sponte facere justa et sancta, inquit Aristoteles, referente Grynæo in Aphor. post Com. in Hebræ. Ne paganismo et atheismo in Christianorum hominum studiis locus sit ullus: imprimis gloriæ Dei, deinde publicæ utilitati inservire oportet, inquit Grynæus Aphor. Præstantissimum genus studii est, bene agere, ait Socrates. Luther was wont to advise preachers to see that these three dogs did not follow them into the pulpit—Pride, Covetousness, or Envy. Nos non habitu sapientiam sed mente præferimus: non eloquimur magna, sed vivimus. Gloriamur nos consecutos quod illi summa intentione quæsiverunt, nec invenire potuerunt. —*Minut. Fælix. Octav.* p. 401. Hæreant sibi invicem, et auxilio sint. Ratio etenim operibus, opera ratione indigent: ut quod mente percipimus opere

venly life, as you are in pressing on others to it. Let your discourse be as edifying and spiritual as you teach them that theirs must be. Go not to law with your people, nor quarrel with them, if you can possibly avoid it. If they wrong you, forgive them: for evil language give them good, and blessing for their cursing. Let go your right rather than let go your hopes and advantages for the winning of one soul. Suffer any thing rather than the Gospel and men's souls should suffer. Become all things lawful to all men, if by any means you may win some. Let men see that you use not the ministry only for a trade to live by, but that your very hearts are wholly set upon the welfare of their souls. Whatsoever meekness, humility, condescension, or self-denial, you teach them from the Gospel, oh! teach it them also by your undissembled, leading example. This is to be guides, and pilots, and governors of the church indeed. Be not like the orators that Diogenes blamed, that studied *bene dicere, non bene facere;* nor like the sign at the inn-door, that hangs out in the rain itself, while it shows others where they may have shelter and refreshing; nor like the fencer that can offend, but not defend; as Cicero said of Cælius, that he was a good right-hand man, but an ill left-hand man. See that you be as well able to defend yourselves when you are tempted by Satan, or accused by men to be proud, covetous, or negligent, as to tell others what they should be. Oh, how many heavenly doctrines are in some people's ears, that never were in the preacher's heart! Too true is that of Hilary, "Sanctiores sunt aures plebis, quam corda sacerdotum." Alas, that ever pride, emulation, hypocrisy, or covetousness, should come into a pulpit! They are hateful in the shops and street, but more hateful in the church, but in the pulpit most of all. What an odious sight is it, to see pride and ambition stand up to preach humility; and hypocrisy to preach up sincerity; and an earthly-minded man to preach for a heavenly conversation! Do I need to tell you that are teachers of others, that we have but a little while longer to preach; and but a few more breaths to breathe, and then we must come down, and be accountable for our work? Do I need to tell you that we must die, and be

perpetremus.—*Hieron. de Veste Sacerdot.* tom. iv. p. (mihi) 26. Tanta debet esse scientia et eruditio pontificis Dei, ut et gressus ejus, et motus, et universa vocalia sint: veritatem mente concipiat; et toto eam habitu resonet, et ornatu: ut quicquid agit, quicquid loquitur, sit doctrina populorum.—*Hieron. ib.* p. 27. fine. Nunquam periclitatur religio nisi inter reverendissimos. Probatum ut Luther. citante D. Stoughton; Valerius Maximus, lib. i. c. 2. inst. 21.

judged as well as our people; or that justice is most severe about the sanctuary; and judgment beginneth at the house of God; and revenge is most implacable about the altar; and jealousy is hottest about the ark? Have you not learned these lessons from Eli, Corah, Nadab, and Abihu, Uzzah, and the Bethshemites, &c., though I had said nothing? Can you forget that even some of our tribe shall say at judgment, "Lord, we have taught in thy name," (Matt. vii.,) who yet must depart with "I know you not?" Do you learn nothing by the afflictions that now lie upon you? You see what hath been done against the ministry of England: how some have been laid hold on by the hand of justice, and some by the hand of violence and injustice, and how all are lashed and reproached by the wanton tongues of ignorant, insolent sectaries; neither prelatical, presbyterian, nor mere independent, now spared, it being the very calling itself that now they set against; how they rob the church of her due maintenance, and make no more of it than Dionysius did of robbing Æsculapius of his golden beard, "Quia barbatus erat filius, at pater Apollo non ita;" or than the same Dionysius did of robbing Jupiter Olympius of the golden coat that Hieron. had given, saying, "that a coat of gold was too heavy for summer, and too cold for winter, but cloth would be suitable to both;" or than he did of robbing the images of the vessels of gold which they held in their hands, saying, "he did but take what they offered, and held forth to him;" or than the same Dionysius did of robbing the temple of Proserpina, when afterwards his ships had a prosperous wind, "Videtis, inquit, quàm prospera navigatio à Diis immortalibus detur sacrilegis: ex hoc colligens aut non esse Deos, aut illis non esse molesta sacrilegia." Sirs, doth God lay all this on the church and ministry for nothing? Doth not the world know that an ignorant, lazy ministry formerly possessed many churches in the land? And how many such are there yet remaining? And those that are better, alas! how far from what we should be, either in knowledge or practice; and yet how unwilling are they to learn what they know not! Even as unwilling as their people are to learn of them, if not much more, Oh, see your errors by the glass of your afflictions, and if the words of God will not serve the turn, let the tongues of enemies and sectaries show you your transgressions. Of whom may I say to you as Erasmus of Luther, "Deus dedit huic postremæ ætati propter morborum multitudinem acrem

medicum;" and as the Emperor Charles of the same Luther, "Si sacrificuli frugi essent, nullo indigerent Luthero." Yet let not any papist catch at this, as if our ministry were unlearned and vicious, in comparison of theirs; the contrary of the common sort is well known: and though the Jesuits of late have been so industrious and learned, yet I could tell them, out of Erasmus, of some that proved heretics must be killed, from Paul's "hæreticum hominem devita," i. e. *vita tolle;* and of Hen. Stephanus' priest of Artois, that would prove that it belonged to his parishioners to pave the church, and not to him; From Jeremy's "paveant illi," not "paveam ego." Or if these seem partial witnesses, I could tell them what Bellarmine saith of the ninth age: "Seculo hoc nullum extitit indoctius aut infelicius, quo qui mathematicæ aut philosophiæ operam dabat, magnus vulgo putabatur;" and as [u] Espencæus saith, "Et Græce nosse suspectum fuerit, Hebraice prope hæreticum." I could tell them also what a clergy was found in Germany, and in England,[x] at the Reformation; what barbarous ignorance, beastly uncleanness, and murders of the children begotten in whoredom, was found among them. I could tell them who have been turned from their church by a mere journey to Rome; there seeing the wickedness of their chiefest clergy: and what Petrarch, Mantuan, with multitudes more, say of it: and (if the most horrid murders were not become virtues with them; and did they not think they did God service by killing his servants) should mind them of all the burnings in England, and of all the unparalleled, bloody massacres in France, and the Inquisition of Spain, which their clergy yet manage and promote. If any say, that I speak this but upon reports, we have seen no such thing, I answer as Pausanias, when he was blamed for dispraising a physician that he had never made trial of, "Si periculum fecissem nequaquam viverem." If we had fallen into their hands, it had been too late to complain: "Quia me vestigia terrent, omnia in adversum

[u] As Doctor Hackwell reciteth him, with more to the same purpose; as one that would prove, that there were ten worlds, from Christ's words, "Nonne decem facti sunt mundi?" And the other disproved him from the words following, "Sed ubi sunt novum?"

[x] I may say to them as Origin to Celsus, lib. iii. p. (mihi) 33. Antistitem ecclesiæ quempiam cum præside aliquo velim contuleris, et civitatis principe: ut planè intelligas vel in defectionibus quidem Dei ecclesiæ consultoribus, etsi primariis viris qui negligentius vivant, et preter solertissimorum quorundam et Christianorum consuedinem, nil minus deprehendi posse, quam ex virtutum profectu, ut se cæteris præferant, &c.—*Origen. cont. Celsum*, lib. iii. (edit. Ascens.) p. 33.

spectantia, nulla retrorsum." And some taste of the fruits of their projects we have lately had in England, by which paw we may sufficiently conjecture of the lion. So that, as bad as we are, our adversaries have little cause to reproach us.

But yet, brethren, let us impartially judge ourselves; for God will shortly judge us impartially. What is it that hath occasioned so many novices to invade the ministry, who, being puffed up with pride, are fallen into the snare of the devil, (1 Tim. iii. 6,) and bring the work of God into contempt by their ignorance? Hath not the ungodliness and ambition of those that are more learned, by bringing learning itself into contempt, been the cause of all this? Alas! who can be so blinded by his charity, as not to see the truth of this among us? How many of the greatest wits have the most graceless hearts! and relish Cicero, Demosthenes, or Aristotle, better than David, or Paul, or Christ; and even loathe those holy ways which customarily they preach for; that have no higher ends in entering upon the ministry, than gain and preferment: and when the hopes of preferment are taken away, they think it but folly to choose such a toilsome and ungrateful work. And thus the ball of reproach is tossed between the well-meaning ignorant, and the ungodly learned; and between these two, how miserable is the church! The one cries out of unlearned schismatics; the other cries out of proud, ungodly persecutors; and say, 'These are your learned men, who study for nothing but for a benefice, or a bishoprick; that are as strange to the mysteries of regeneration, and a holy life, as any others!' and oh, that these reproaches were not too true of many! God hath lessened ministers of late, one would think sufficiently, to beware of ambition and secular avocations; but it is hard to hear God speak by the tongue of an enemy, or to see and acknowledge his hand where the instrument doth miscarry.[7] If English ex-

[7] Negabitis sat scio, et pernegabitis, &c. at verendum vehementer ne vos ipsos decipiatis; non novum hoc, nec infrequens seducere alios, qui à seipsis seducti sunt. In propriis cæcutimus omnes. Actus reflexus mentis longe difficilior est actu directo. In theologia vero, omnium longe rarissimum et difficultatis plenissimum, nosse seipsum: falluntur et fallunt quicunque theologi ipsos nondum satis norunt. Velim ante omnia caveretis vobis ipsis quam diligentissime ab hypocrisi: grave, inquis, crimen! Ergone hypocritæ tibi videmur? Atrocem injuriam! &c. Quotidianum est nostrum quemvis in aliis reprehendere, à quo ipse non sit plane immunis. Quid miri si idem eveniat quibusdam theologis? Iis cum primis qui affectibus nimium indulgent suis, ut in aliis hypocrisin notent, in seipsis non videant, non deprehendant? Omnium vitiorum subtilissimum sane est hypocrisis: quod non modo

amples have lost their force, as being so near your eyes that you cannot see them, remember the end of Funicius, that learned chronologer, who might have lived longer as a divine, but died as a prince's counsellor, and the distich pronounced at his death.

Disce meo exemplo, mandato munere fungi,
Et fuge ceu pestem τὴν πολυπραγμοσύνην.

And the like fate of Justus Jonas, (J. C., son of that great divine of that name,) the next year, whose last verses were like the former.

Quid juvat innumeros scire atque evolvere casus,
Si facienda fugis, si fugienda facis?

Study not, therefore, the way of rising, but the way of righteousness. Honesty will hold out, when honours will deceive you. If your hearts be once infected with the fermentation of this swelling humour, it will quickly rise up to your brain, and corrupt your intellectuals, and then you will be of that opinion which your flesh thinks to be good, and not that which your judgment thought to be true; and you will fetch your religion from the statute-book, and not from the Bible, as the jest went of Agricola, who turned from a protestant to an antinomian; and being convinced of that error, turned papist, into the other extreme; and Pflugius and Sidonius, authors of the Interim; "Chrisma ab eis et oleum pontificium inter alia defenduntur, ut ipsi discederent unctiores," because they obtained bishopricks by it. Oh, what a doleful case is it to see so many brave wits, and men of profound learning, to be made as useless and hurtful to the church of God by their pride and ungodliness, as others are by their pride and ignorance! Were a clear understanding conjoined with a holy heart and heavenly life, and were they as

alios quosvis, sed suos possessores miris modis et artibus valet decipere et circumvenire: quo callidior hic serpens, quo magis lubricus illabitur hominum mentibus, eo majore studio, eo acriori vigilantia fugiendus aut pellendus.—*Rupertus Meldenius Paræneſi Votiv. pro Pace Eccl.* fol. B. 23. Perdit authoritatem docendi cujus sermo opere destruitur.—*Hieron. ad Ocean.* tom. iii. p. (edit. Erasm.) 147. Innocens tamen et absque sermone conversatio, quantum exèmplo prodest, tantum silentio nocet.—*Ibid.* Qui alios docendi funguntur munere, non doctrina tantum sed etiam vitæ innocentia, ac morum integritate, suis debere esse conspicuos, dicere solitus est Dr. Bordingus, ut Melchior. Adam. in ejus vita. Mentior nisi alios qui talis est increpat; turpes turpis infamat; et evasisse se conscium credit; quia conscientiam suam non posse effugere satis non fit, eidem in publico accusatores, in occulto rei; in semetipsos censores pariter et nocentes: damnant foris quod intus operantur: admittunt libenter, quod cum admiserint criminantur; audacia prorsus cum vitiis faciens.—*Cyprian. Epist.* 1. *ad Donatum.*

skilful in spiritual as human learning, what a glory and blessing would they be to the churches!

Sect. X. 5. Lastly, Be sure that you study and strive after unity and peace.[z] If ever you would promote the kingdom of Christ, and your people's salvation, do it in a way of peace and love: public wars and private quarrels do usually pretend the reformation of the church, the vindicating of the truth, and the welfare of souls, but they as usually prove in the issue, the greatest means to the overthrow of all.

It is as natural for both wars and private contentions to produce errors, schisms, contempt of magistracy, ministry, and ordinances, as it is for a dead carrion to breed worms and vermin: believe it from one that hath too many years' experience of both in armies and garrisons: it is as hard a thing to maintain, even in your people, a sound understanding, a tender conscience, a lively, gracious, heavenly frame of spirit, and an upright life, in a way of war and contention, as to keep your candle lighted in the greatest storms, or under the waters.[a]

The like I may say of perverse and fierce disputings about baptism, and the circumstantials of discipline, or other questions that are far from the foundation; they oftener lose the truth than find it.

A synod is as likely and lawful a means as any for such decisions;[b] and yet Nazianzen saith, "Se hactenus non vidisse ullius synodi utilem finem, aut in qua res male se habentes, non magis exacerbatæ quam curatæ fuerint."

With the vulgar,[c] he seems to be the conqueror that hath the last word, or at least he that hath the most plausible deportment, the most affecting tone, the most earnest and confi-

[z] Therefore Christ died not, after the manner of John, with his head cut off, nor yet as Isaias, cut asunder, that so even in death he might keep his body whole and undivided, and so no occasion might be given to them that would divide the church.—*Athanasius de Incarnat. Verbi.*

[a] Ignatius gives a true character of most soldiers, in his Epistle to the Romans, (edit. Usserii, p. 85) θηριομαχῶ διὰ γῆς καὶ θαλάσσης, νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας, ἐνδεδεμένος δέκα λεοπάρδοις (ὁ ἐστὶ στρατιωτικὸν τάγμα) οἱ καὶ εὐεργετούμεναι χείρους γίνονται, ἐν δὲ τοῖς ἀδικήμασιν αὐτῶν μᾶλλον μαθητεύομαι. I would we could as patiently bear, and make as good use of, the like dispositions.

[b] How far synods are necessary, and yet particular ministers of churches are independent, see, by comparing Cyprian's Epist. 72. sect. iii. p. 217, with Firmilian's Epist. to Cyprian, ep. 75. p. (mihi) 236.

[c] How many disputes did you ever hear end as Minut. Fælix. Octav.; Post hæc læti hilaresque discessimus: Cæcilius quod crediderit, Octavius quod vicerit: et ego quod hic crediderit, et hic vicerit.

dent expressions, the most probable arguments, rather than he that hath the most naked demonstrations. He takes with them most, that speaks for the opinion which they like and are inclined to, though he speak nonsense: and he that is most familiar with them, hath the best opportunities and advantages to prevail, especially he that hath the greatest interest in their affections. So that a disputation before the vulgar, even of the godly, is as likely a means to corrupt them, as to cure them; usually the most erroneous seducers will carry out their cause with as good a face, as fluent a tongue, as great contempt and reproach of their opposers, and as much confidence, that the truth is on their side, as if it were so indeed.

Paræus's [d] master taught him that "certo certius in qualibet minutissima panis portione, vere et substantialiter integrum corpus Christi esset: item in, apud, cum, sub minutissima vini guttula adesset integer sanguis dominicus." What confidence was here in a bad cause! And if you depend on the most reverend and best-esteemed teachers, and suffer the weight of their reputation to turn the scales, you may in many things be never the nearer to the truth. How many learned able men have the name and authority of Luther misled in the point of con-substantiation? Ursin was carried away with it awhile, till he was turned from it by the reading of Luther's own arguments, they were such paralogisms. Yet was it Luther's charge to his followers, "that none should call themselves after his name, because he died not for them, nor was his doctrine his own." The only way, therefore, to the prospering your labours, is, to quench all flames of contention, to your power. If you would have the waters of verity and piety to be clear, the way is not to stir in them, and trouble them, but to let them settle in peace, and run down into practice.

Woe to those ministers who make unnecessary divisions and parties among the people, that so they may get themselves a name, and be cried up by many followers! And as you should thus study the peace and unity of your congregations, so keep out all the occasions of division, especially the doctrine of separation,[e] and popular church government, the apparent seminary

[d] Paræus in Prefat. ad Comment. in Gen.: Suasorius enim, et verisimilis est, exquirens fucos, error; sine fuco autem est veritas, et propter hoc pueris credita est.—*Iren. adv. Hæres.* lib. iii. c. 15.

[e] De independentibus orthodoxis et hæreticis, et horum tolerantia, lege Dav. Blondellum de jure plebis in regimine ecclesiast. pp. 72—75.

of faction and perpetual contentions. If once your people be taught that it belongeth to them to govern themselves, and those that Scripture calleth their guides and rulers, you shall have mad work! When every one is a governor, who are the governed? When the multitude, how unable soever, must hear and judge of every cause, both their teachers and others, they need no other employment to follow: this will find them work enough, as it doth to parliament-men to sit, and hear, and speak, and vote.

Is it not strange that so learned a man as Pet. Ramus[f] should be advocate for the multitude's authority in church-government? But that God must use so sharp a cure for those contentions, as that bloody French massacre, methinks should make England tremble to consider it, lest the same disease here must have the like cure. If an army had tried this popular government but one year among themselves in their military affairs, and had attempted and managed all their designs by the vote of the whole army, I durst have valued their judgments the better ever after in this point.

Woe to the patient that must have a mistaken physician, till he be grown skilful by making experiments upon his diseases:[g]

[f] Pet. Ramus volebat non penes paucos, sed penes universam ecclesiam esse judicium doctrinæ, electionem et rejectionem ministrorum, excommunicationem et absolutionem.——A synodo autem approbata disciplina usitata, novæ autem opiniones explosæ sunt. Injunctum etiam illarum partium ecclesiis, ut omni studio, flectere illos, et si non ad sententiam mutandam, saltem, ad pacem fovendam, mansuete invitare conarentur. Sed nova et inaudita crudelitas quæ Parisiis exorta in nuptiis illis fatalibus longe lateque regnum Galliæ pervasit, domesticas et intestinas contentiones omnes sustulit. —*In vita Bullingeri.* Aureliæ synodo præsedit Sadeel, ubi cum primis eorum opinio discussa confutataque qui disciplinam pariter doctrinamque democratico vel potius ochlocratico more quodam ex populi suffragiis regi administrarique volebant.——Et cum in aliis provinciis recrudiscere illud super ecclesiastica politia dissidium intelligeret Sadeel, censuit de re tota sibi ampliter esse disserendum. Atque habita synodo rursum, cui et præfuit, tanta felicitate usus est dicendi docendique, ut schismatis ejus princeps, vir alioqui eruditionis haud spernendæ, in orthodoxorum partes sese contulerit, ac mutatam sententiam edito libello professus sit.—*In vita Sadeel.* In Nemausensi synodo actum de disciplina ecclesiastica, cujus formam quandam novam et insolitam quidam Johan. Parisiensis non animo tantum, sed etiam scripto designabat: eique viri quidam docti rerum novarum pruritu plus æquo laborantes adhærebant, et magna verborum argumentorumque acie opinionem illius munitam defendebant. Illorum tamen conatui sese opposuit Beza, doctissime et disertissime rem totam edisserens. Ejus sententiam tota synodus unanimo consensu approbavit, &c.—*In vita Bez.*

[g] All heretics say, as Judas to Christ, Master; and with a kiss, that is, a show of love to it, they betray the truth.—*Origen*, Tract. 35. in Matt. Non omnes qui Christi nomine gloriantur, et in externo civitatis Dei cœtu et

and woe to the people that are in such hands, as must learn their skill in government from the common calamities only, and from their experience of the sufferings of the people! This kind of knowledge, I confess, is the thoroughest; but it is pity that so many others should pay so dear for it.

You, therefore, who are the guides of this chariot of Christ, take heed of losing the reins, lest all be overthrown. Alas! poor England, how are thy bowels torn out, because thy inhabitants, yea, and guides, run all into extremes, like a drunken man that reeleth from side to side, but cannot keep the middle way: nay, they hate a man of peace, who runs not out into their extremes. One party would pluck up the hedge of government, as if the vineyard could not be fruitful, except it lie waste to the pleasure of all the beasts of the forest. They are like the pond that should grudge at the banks and dam, and thinks it injurious to be thus restrained of its liberty, and therefore combine with the winds to raise a tempest, and so assault and break down the banks in their rage; and now where is that peaceable association of waters? Methinks the enemies of government are just in the case,[h] as I remember, when I was a boy, our school was in, when we had barred out our master, we grudged at our yoke, we longed for liberty; because it was not given us, we resolved to take it. When we had got out our master, and shut fast the doors, we grew bold, and talked to him at our pleasure: then no one was master, and every one was our master. We spend our time in playing and quarrelling, we treat at last with our master about coming in; but our liberty was so sweet that we were loth to leave it, and we had run ourselves so deep in guilt, that we durst not trust him, and therefore we resolve to let him in no more: but, in the end, when our playdays, which we called holidays, were over, we were fain to give an account of our boldness, and soundly to be whipped for it, and so to come under the yoke again. Lord, if this be the case of England, let us rather be whipped, and whipped again, than turned out of thy school, and from under thy government.

We feel now how those are mistaken that think the way for

panegyri versantur, jus habent suffragii: multi inter eos ærarii, vel in ceritum tabulas relati, imo civitate plane indigni. Quis vero populum ad suffragia vocabit?—*Tilen. in D. Twiss Defens. contra Corvin.* p. 33.

[h] Stat contra rationem, defensor mali sui, populus. Hic exitus est omnis judicii, in quo lis secundum plures datur.—*Seneca de Vita Beat.* c. i.

the church's unity,[1] is to dig up the banks and let all loose, that every man in religion may do what he list.[k]

On the other side, some men, to escape this Scylla, do fall into the Charybdis of violence and formality. They must have all men to walk in fetters, and they must be the makers of them; and ministers must be taught to preach by such jives as their horses are taught to pace. No man must be suffered to come into a pulpit, that thinks not or speaks not as they would have him: or, if they cannot take away his liberty, they will do what they can to blast his reputation. Yet if he cannot have the repute of being orthodox, it were well if they would leave him the reputation of a Christian.

But having, also, a Christianity of their own making, and proper to themselves, they will presently unchristen him, and make him a heretic by proclamation; as if they had so far the power of the keys, as to lock up the doors of heaven against him, and wipe out his name from the book of life.

It striketh me sometimes into an amazement with admiration, that it should be possible for such mountains of pride to remain in the hearts of many godly, reverend ministers! That they should no more be conscious of the weakness of their own understandings, but that even in disputable, difficult things they must be the rule by which all others must be judged.[l]. So that every man's judgment must be cut meet to the standard of theirs; and whatsoever opinion is either shorter or longer,

[1] Tinea est Arius: tinea Photinus, qui sanctum ecclesiæ vestimentum impietate scindunt, et sacrilego morsu fidei velamen abrodunt.—*Ambros. de Spirit.* lib. i. c. 19.

[k] Non est levior transgressio in interpretatione, quam in conversatione.—*Tertul. de Pudicit.* c. 9.

[l] Quid possumus exponere de oceani accessu et recessu, cum constet esse certam causam? Vel quid dicere possumus, quomodo pluviæ, et coruscationes, et tonitrua, et collectiones nubium, et nebulæ, et ventorum emissiones et similia his efficiuntur? &c. In his omnibus nos quidem loquaces erimus, requirentes causas eorum: qui autem ea facit, solus Deus veridicus est. Si ergo et in rebus creaturæ, quædam quidem eorum adjacent Deo; quædam autem et in nostram venerunt scientiam, Quid mali est si et eorum quæ in Scripturis requiruntur, universis Scripturis spiritualibus existentibus, quædam absolvamus secundum gratiam Dei, quædam autem commendemus Deo? Et non solum in hoc seculo, sed et in futuro? Ut semper quidem Deus doceat; homo autem semper discat quæ sunt à Deo, &c.—*Irenæus advers. Hæres.* lib. ii. c. 47. Arrogantia profectus obstaculum est, ut recte Bion. Vecordis homines est, à nemine aliquid didicisse velle videri, ut dixit Antisthenes. Read Juuius Eirenicon in Psal. cxxii. and cxxxiii. in operum ejus tom. i. p. 679, &c. a most precious piece. Read Bishop Hall's 17th Soliloquy, called. 'Allowable Variety,' p. 62. Omnis secta humana authoritate firmata, ratione caret.—*Æneas Sylvius in Platina.*

must be rejected with the scorn of a heresy or an error. Wonderful! That men who have ever studied divinity should no more discern the profundities, and difficulties, and their own incapacities! More wonderful, that any disciple of Christ should be such an enemy to knowledge as to resolve they will know no more themselves than is commonly known, or suffer any other to know more. So that when a man hath read once what is the opinion of the divines that are in most credit, he dare search no further, for fear of being counted a novelist or heretic, or lest he bear their curse for adding to, or taking from, the common conceits! So that divinity is become an easier study than heretofore. We are already at a *ne plus ultra*. It seemeth vain, when we know the opinion is in credit, to search any further. We have then nothing to do but easily to study for popular sermons: nor is it safe so much as to make them our own, by looking into and examining their grounds, lest in so doing we should be forced to a dissent: so that scholars may easily be drawn to think that it is better to be at a venture of the common belief, which may be with ease, than to weary and spend themselves in tedious studies, when they are sure, beforehand, of no better reward from men than the reputation of heretics, which is the lot of all that go out of the common road. So that who will hereafter look after any more truth than is known and in credit, except it be some one that is so taken with admiration of it as to cast all his reputation overboard, rather than make shipwreck of his self-prized merchandise; yet most wonderful it is, that any Christian, especially so many godly ministers, should arrogate to themselves the high prerogatives of God, viz., to be the rule and standard of truth![m] I know they will say that Scripture is the rule; but when they must be the peremptory judges of the sense of that Scripture,[n] so that in the hardest controversies none must swerve from their sense, upon pain of being branded with heresy or error, what is this but to be the judges themselves, and Scripture but their servant? The final, full, decisive interpretation of laws,

[m] I speak this only of the guilty, and not of any pious and peaceable divine, of whom England hath many, but useth them so ill that they show themselves unworthy of them.

[n] Lege Cameronem accurate disserentem de Potestate Eccles. Prælect., and besides Cameron, Musculus, with many others, deny any judicial, decisive power in ministers, in doctrinals. Vid. Videlii Rationale Theolog. lib. iii. c. 6. p. 511. But a doctoral power, as Camero calls it, such as a schoolmaster hath in his school, except the power of bodily punishment which belongeth to the magistrate, both in the commonwealth and in the church, even

belongeth to none but the law-makers themselves; for who can know another man's meaning beyond his expressions, but himself?

And it yet increaseth my wonder that these divines have not forgotten how constantly our divines, that write against the papists, do disclaim any such living, final, decisive judge of controversies, but make Scripture the only judge. Oh! what mischief hath the church of Christ suffered by the enlarging of her creed.[o] While it contained but twelve articles, believers were plain, and peaceable, and honest: but a Christian now is not the same thing as then; our heads swell so big, like children that have the rickets, that all the body fares the worse for it. Every new article that was added to the creed, was a new engine to stretch the brains of believers, and in the issue to rend out the bowels of the church.

It never went so well with the church, since it begun, as Erasmus saith of the times of the Nicene council, "rem ingeniosam fore Christianum esse," to be a matter of so much wit and cunning to be a Christian. Not but all our wit should be here employed, and controversies of difficulty may be debated;[p] but when the decision of these must be put into our creed, and a man must be of the faith that the church is of, it goes hard. Methinks I could read Aquinas, or Scotus, or Bellarmine, with profit, *ut philosophiam et theologiam liberam;* but when I must make them all parts of my creed, and subscribe to all they say, or else be no Catholic, this is hard dealing. I know now we

as a church, whatsoever some say to the contrary, is the proper power of the minister, which is far more than a declarative power; for he hath also a power to command and determine of order and degrees, &c., and the scholars ought to take his word in all doubtful things, till they can come to know it themselves in its proper evidence. But yet it is not so great as to bind to any mistake or sin, *clave errante;* for an interpretation of the law is, *ipso facto*, void, if it be apparently contrary to the plain text, else God should not be the supreme authority, but man.

[o] Let them that take their religion from the credit of divines remember, that it was the mark to difference pagans from Christians formerly to take religion from man. Vobis humana æstimatio innocentiam tradidit; humana item dominatio imperavit: inde nec plenæ, nec adeo timendæ estis disciplinæ ad innocentiæ veritatem. Tanta est prudentia hominis ad demonstrandum bonum, quanta autoritas est ad exigendum: tam illa falli facilis, quam ista contemni.—*Tertul. Apologetic.* c. 45. Sinceræ ac divinæ religionis, pietatisque cognitio non tam humano ministerio indiget, quam ex seipsa hauritur et discitur, quippe quæ quotidie operibus clamat, ac per doctrinam Christi sese clariorem sole ingerit oculis, inquit Athanasius, initio lib. i. cont. Gentiles. And Justin Martyr extolleth that saying of Socrates, "that no man is to be preferred before the truth."—*Apol. prima.*

[p] Lege Vitam Ge. Majoris.

have no Spanish Inquisition to fire us from the truth; but, as Grynæus was wont to say, "Pontifici Romano Erasmum plus nocuisse jocando, quam Lutherum stomachando;" so some men's reproaches may do more than other men's persecutions.

And it is not the least aggravation of these men's arrogancy, that they are most violent in the points that they have least studied, or which they are most ignorant in: yea, and that their cruel reproaches are usually so incessant, that where they once fasten, they scarce ever loose again; having learned the old lesson, "To be sure to accuse boldly, for the scar will remain when the wound is healed." Yea, some will not spare the fame of the dead, but when their souls have the happiness of saints with God, their names must have the stain of heresy with men. More ingenuity had Charles the emperor, when the Spanish soldiers would have dug up the bones of Luther: "Sinite ipsum, inquit, quiescere ad diem resurrectionis et judicium omnium," &c. "Let him rest," saith he, "till the resurrection and the final judgment; if he were a heretic, he shall have as severe a judge as you can desire."

These are the extremes which poor England groaneth under; and is there no remedy? Besides the God of peace, there is no remedy. Peace is fled from men's principles and judgments, and therefore it is a stranger to their affections and practices; no wonder then if it be a stranger in the land, both in church and state.[q]

If either of the forementioned extremes be the way to peace, we may have it, or else where is the man that seeketh after it? But I remember Luther's oracle, and fear it now to be verified; "Hæc perdent religionem Christianam: 1. Oblivio beneficiorum ab evangelio acceptorum. 2. Securitas, quæ jam passim et ubique regnat. 3. Sapientia mundi, quæ vult omnia redigere in ordinem, et impiis mediis ecclesiæ paci consulere." Three things will destroy the Christian religion: First, Forgetfulness of the benefit we received by the Gospel. Secondly, Security. Thirdly, The wisdom of the world, which will needs reduce all into order, and look to the church's peace by ungodly means.

The zeal of my spirit after peace, hath made me digress here further than I intended; but the sum and scope of all my

[q] Non damno quenquam si à me dissentiat; modo fundamentum, hoc est symbola non subruat. Agnosco communem imbecillitatem quam et deploro, et rogo Deum, ut ipse manum ædificio adhibeat.—*Hemming. in Epist. Dedic. ante Comment. in Ephes.* Learn of a moderate Lutheran.

speech is this :[r] Let every conscionable minister study equally for peace and truth, as knowing that they dwell both together in the golden mean, and not at such a distance as most hotspurs do imagine; and let them believe that they are likely to see no more success of their labours, than they are so studious of peace; and that all wounds will let out both blood and spirits; and both truth and godliness is ready to run out at every breach that shall be made among the people or themselves, and that the time for the pastures of profession to be green, and for the field of true godliness to grow ripe for the harvest, and for the rose of devotion and heavenliness to be fragrant and flourish, is not in the blustering stormy tempestuous winter, but in the calm delightful summer of peace.

Oh, what abundance of excellent, hopeful fruits of godliness have I seen blown down before they were ripe, by the impetuous winds of wars, and other contentions, and so have lain trodden under foot by libertinism and sensuality, as meat for swine, who else might have been their master's delight! In a word, I never yet saw the work of the Gospel go on well in wars, nor the business of men's salvation succeed among dissensions; but if one have in such times proved a gainer, multitudes have been losers: the same God is the God both of truth and peace; the same Christ is the Prince of Peace, and author of salvation; the same word is the Gospel of peace and salvation: both have the same causes; both are wrought and carried on by the same Spirit; the same persons are the sons of peace and salvation, so inseparably do they go hand in hand together: O therefore let us be the ministers and helpers of our people's peace, as ever we desire to be helpers of their salvation.

And how impossible is it for ministers to maintain peace

[r] I would, therefore, advise all ministers that need my advice, to study less those violent writers that care not what they say against their adversaries, so they can disgrace them; and to read more our solid, peace-making divines. For, if I have any judgment, these are generally the most knowing and judicious, as well as the most moderate, such as Davenant, Matth. Martinius, Lud. Crocius, Camero, Lud. Capellus, Amiraldus, (yea, and Testardus, for all men's hot words,) Pelargus, Paræus's Eirenicon, Conrad. Bergius, our Doctor Preston, Ball, Parker, Bradshaw, Gataker, Mede, Wotton, with the like; not to mention all the Eirenicons that the German divines have written; nor Hottonus de Toler., and many others, that have written purposely for pacification. Oh, what a thing is self-love! If men do want peace in their own consciences, or in the humours of their own bodies, they can quickly feel it, and think themselves undone till they have peace again; and yet the want of peace in church and state is no trouble to them, but for their own ends and fancies they can delight in divisions.

among their people, if they maintain not peace among themselves!* Oh, what a staggering is it to the faith of the weak, when they see their teachers and leaders at such odds! It makes them ready to throw away all religion, when they see scarcely two or three of the most learned and godly divines of one mind, but like the bitterest enemies, disgracing and vilifying one another, and all because the articles of our faith must be so unlimited, voluminous, and almost infinite; so that no man well knows when he may call himself an orthodox Christian. When our creed is swelled to the bigness of a national confession, one would think that he that subscribeth to that confession should be orthodox;† and yet if he jump not just with the times in expounding every article of that confession, and run not with the stream in every other point that is in question among them, though he had subscribed to the whole harmony of confessions, he is never the nearer the estimation of orthodox. Were we all bound together by a confession or subscription of the true fundamentals, and those other points that are next to fundamentals only, and there took up our Christianity and unity, yielding each other a freedom of differing in smaller or more difficult points, or in expressing ourselves in different terms, and so did live peaceably and lovingly together notwithstanding such differences, as men that all know the mysteriousness of

* Sit consensus cordis credendo, et linguæ confitendo.—*Origen.* Tract. 6. in Matt. xviii. 19.

† Lud. Crocius in Syntagm. et Parker de Descensu, two most excellent, learned men, say that the first creed contained no more but, "I believe in God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost;" and the reverend Bishop Usher will tell you, 'Dissert. de Symbolis,' p. 8—12, &c., how short the Roman creed, and the Hierusalem and Alexandrian creed, &c. were. Some then were shorter than ours, called the Apostles' creed, as we use it now; and yet these men that I blame, would think the longest there too short, if it were ten times longer; yet then even they that had the shortest, thought it dangerous to alter it. Romanam vero ecclesiam omnis in suo symbolo mutationis impatientem fuisse ex Ruffino audivimus. Quo spectat et Ambros. illud in Epist. 81. ad Siric. Credatur symbolo apostolorum, quod ecclesia Romana intemeratum semper custodit et servat. Et Vigilii Trid. lib. iv. adversus Eutych. Roma, et antequam Nicæna synodus conveniret, à temporibus apostolorum usque ad nunc, ita fidelibus symbolum tradidit. Quo tamen hodie Romana ecclesia utitur symbolum, additamentis aliquot auctius legi, res ipsa indicat.—*Usserius de Symbolis*, p. 9. Romanum (symbolum) omnium fuisse brevissimum, in symboli explicatione, Ruffinus Aquil. Presbyter jamdudum nos docuit: de additamentis etiam apud occidentales ad Romanum hoc appositis, in Procemio suo sic præfatus. Illud non importune commonendum puto, quod in diversis ecclesiis aliqua in his verbis inveniuntur adjecta. In ecclesia tamen urbis Romæ, hoc non deprehenditur factum: quod ego propterea esse arbitror, quod neque hæresis ulla illic sumpsit exordium, et

divinity, and the imperfection of their own understandings, and that here we know but in part, and therefore shall most certainly err and differ in part; what a world of mischief might this course prevent!

I oft think on the examples of Luther and Melancthon: it was not a few things that they differed in, nor such as would now be accounted small, besides the imperious harshness of Luther's disposition, as Carolostadius could witness; and yet how sweetly, and peaceably, and lovingly did they live together, without any considerable breach or disagreement! As Mel. Adamus saith of them, "Et si tempora fuerunt ad distractiones proclivia, hominumque levitas dissidiorum cupida, tamen cum alter alterius vitia nosset, nunquam inter eos simultas extitit, ex qua animorum alienatio subsecuta sit;" so that their agreement arose not hence, that either was free from faults or error, but knowing each other's faults, they did more easily bear them. Certainly if every difference in judgment in matters of religion should seem intolerable, or make a breach in affection, then no two men on earth must live together, or tolerate each other, but every man must resolve to live by himself; for no two on earth but differ in one thing or other, except such as take all their faith upon trust, and explicitly believe nothing at all. God hath not made our judgments all of a complexion, any more than our faces; nor our knowledge all of a size, any more than our bodies; and methinks men, that be not resolved to be any thing

mos ibi servatur antiquus, eos qui gratiam baptismi suscepturi sunt, publice, id est, fidelium populo audiente, symbolum reddere: et utique adjectionem unius saltem sermonis, eorum qui præcesserunt in fide, non admittit auditus. In cæteris autem locis, quantum intelligi datur, propter nonnullos hæreticos addita quædam videntur, per quæ novellæ doctrinæ sensus crederetur excludi.—*Usher de Symb.* p. 5. Lege pacificam illam et Christianissimam Augustini epistolam ad Hieronymum (senem morosum) quæ est inter opera Hieron. tom. iii. p. (edit. Amerbach.) 158, &c. Si ergo secundum hunc mundum, quem diximus, quædam quidem quæstionum Deo commiserimus, et fidem nostram servabimus, et omnis Scriptura à Deo nobis data consonans nobis invenietur. Et parabolæ his quæ manifeste dicta sunt consonabunt; et manifeste dicta absolvent parabolas, et per dictionum multas voces, unam consonantem melodiam in nobis sentiet, laudantem hymnis Deum qui fecit omnia. Ut puta siquis interroget, Antequam mundum faceret Deus, quid agebat? Dicimus quoniam ista responsio subjacet Deo, quoniam mundus hic factus est apotelestos à Deo, temporale initium accipiens, Scripturæ nos docent: quid autem ante hoc Deus sit operatus nulla Scriptura manifestat: subjacet ergo hæc responsio Deo; et non ita stultas, et sine disciplina blasphemas adinvenire velle prolationes, et per hoc quod putes te invenisse materiæ prolationem, ipsum Deum qui fecit omnia reprobare, &c.—*Irenæus advers. Hæres.* lib. ii. c. 47. I entreat my brethren of the ministry, that are apt to be too zealous in their opinions, to read, above all other, Davenant, Morton, and Hall 'De Pace,' and Conr. Bergius.

in religion, should be afraid of making the articles of their faith so numerous, lest they should shortly become heretics themselves, by disagreeing from themselves; and they should be afraid of making too strict laws for those that differ in judgment in controvertible points, lest they should shortly change their judgments, and so make a rod for their own backs; for how know they, in difficult disputable cases, but within these twelve months themselves may be of another mind, except they are resolved never to change, for fear of incurring the reproach of novelty and mutability; and then they were best resolve to study no more, nor ever to be wiser. I would we knew just at what age a man must receive this principle against changing his judgment; I am afraid lest at last they should teach it their children, and lest many divines do learn it too young; and if any, besides Christ and his apostles, must be the standard and foundation of our faith, I would we could certainly tell who they are; for I have heard yet none but the pope, or his general council, expressly lay claim to the prerogative of infallibility; and I think there are few that have appeared more fallible: for my own part, I admire the gifts of God in our first reformers, Luther, Melancthon, Calvin, &c. And I know no man, since the apostles' days, whom I value and honour more than Calvin, and whose judgment, in all things, one with another, I more esteem and come nearer to; though I may speed as Amyraldus, to be thought to defend him but for a defence to his own errors; but yet if I thought we must needs be in all things of his mind, and know no more in any one point than he did, I should heartily wish that he had lived one fifty years longer, that he might have increased and multiplied his knowledge before he died, and then succeeding ages might have had leave to have grown wiser, till they had attained to know as much as he. Some men can tell what to say in point of ceremonies, common-prayer, &c. when they are pressed with the examples and judgments of our first reformers; but in matters of doctrine, they forget their own answers, as if they had been perfect here, and not in the other; or as if doctrinals were not much fuller of mysteries and difficulties than worship. So far am I from speaking all this for the security of myself in my differing from others, that if God would dispense with me for my ministerial services, without any loss to his people, I should leap as lightly as Bishop Ridley, when he was stripped of his pontificalia, and say as Pædaretus the Laconian, when he was not chosen in numerum trecen-

torum, "Gratias habeo tibi, O Deus, quod tot homines me meliores huic civitati dedisti."[t]

But I must stop, and again apologise for this tediousness; though it be true, as Zeno saith, "verbis multis non eget veritas;" yet "respiciendum etiam quibus egent lectores," I conclude not with a laconism, but a christianism, as hoping my brethren will at least hear their Master, "Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another:" (Mark ix. 50:) and Calvin's exposition, which is the sum of all I have said, *q. d.* "Danda est vobis opera, non tantum ut salsi intus sitis, sed etiam ut saliatis alios: quia tamen sal acrimonia sua mordet, ideo statim admonet, sic temperandum esse condituram, ut pax interim salva maneat." And with R. Meldenius Paræn. fol. f. 2. "Verbo dicam: si nos servaremus in necessariis unitatem, in non necessariis libertatem, in utrisque charitatem; optimo certe loco essent res nostræ: ita fiat. Amen." Inquit Conr. Bergius hæc recitans.

Sect. XI. 6. The last whom I would persuade to this great work of helping others to the heavenly rest, is, parents, and masters of families: All you that God hath instrusted with children or servants, O consider what duty lieth on you for the furthering of their salvation.[u] That this exhortation may be the more effectual with you, I will lay down these several considerations for you seriously to think on:

1. What plain and pressing commands of God are there that require this great duty at your hand! "And these words which I command thee this day shall be in thy heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." (Deut. vi. 6—8.) So Deut. xi. And how well is God pleased with this in Abraham! "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do? For I know him, that he will command his children, and his household after him, that they shall keep the way of the Lord," &c. (Gen. xviii. 19.) And it is Joshua's resolution,[x] "that he and his household will serve the Lord." "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not

[t] Brus. lib i. c. 18. ex Plut. Laert. lib. iii.

[u] Read Woodward's 'Child's Patrimony.'

[x] Joshua xxiv. 15. Jubet Deus Abrahamum non apud se sepelire divinas revelationes, sed et domesticis commemorare, et ad posteros propagare, ut vera Dei agnitio de manu in manum tradita in ejus familia conservetur.—*Pareus in Genes.* xviii. 19. p. 1161.

depart from it." (Prov. xxii. 6.) "Bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." (Eph. vi. 4.) Many the like precepts, especially in the book of Proverbs, you may find: so that you see it is a work that the Lord of heaven and earth hath laid upon you, and how then dare you neglect it, and cast it off?

2. It is a duty that you owe your children in point of justice; from you they received the defilement and misery of their natures, and therefore you owe them all possible help for their recovery. If you had but hurt a stranger, yea, though against your will, you would think it your duty to help to cure him.

3. Consider, How near your children are to you, and then you will perceive that from this natural relation also they have interest in your utmost help.[7] Your children are, as it were, parts of yourselves, if they prosper when you are dead, you take it almost as if you lived and prospered in them. If you labour ever so much, you think it not ill bestowed, nor your buildings or purchases too dear, so that they may enjoy them when you are dead; and should you not be of the same mind for their everlasting rest?

4. You will else be witnesses against your own selves; your great care, and pains, and cost for their bodies, will condemn you for your neglect of their precious souls. You can spend yourselves in toiling and caring for their bodies, and even neglect your own souls, and venture them sometimes upon unwarrantable courses, and all to provide for your posterity; and have you not as much reason to provide for their souls? Do you not believe that your children must be everlastingly happy or miserable when this life is ended? and should not that be forethought in the first place?

5. Yea, all the very brute creatures may condemn you; which of them is not tender of their young? How long will the hen sit to hatch her chickens; and how busily scrape for them; and how carefully shelter and defend them! and so will even the most vile and venomous serpent, and will you be more unnatural and hard-hearted than all these? Will you suffer your children to be ungodly and profane, and run on in the undoubted way to damnation, and let them alone to destroy themselves without control?[8]

[7] Nolle liberos contristare docendo quæ bona sunt, libertatem permittere peccandi, non est amare filios, sed odisse.—*Megand.* in 1 *Tim.* iii. 12.

[8] Utitur verbo [præcipiet] ut parentes et superiores intelligant, non segre

6. Consider, God hath made your children to be your charge; yea, and your servants too. Every one will confess they are the minister's charge, and what a dreadful thing it is for them to neglect them, when God hath told them, that if they tell not the wicked of their sin and danger, their blood shall be required at that minister's hands; and is not your charge as great and as dreadful as theirs? Have not you a greater charge of your own families than any minister hath? Yea, doubtless, and your duty it is to teach, and admonish, and reprove them, and watch over them, and at your hands else God will require the blood of their souls. The greatest it is that ever you were intrusted with, and woe to you if you prove unfaithful, and betray your trust, and suffer them to be ignorant for want of your teaching, or wicked for want of your admonition or correction. Oh, sad account, that many parents will make!

7. Look into the dispositions and lives of your children, and see what a work there is for you to do. First, It is not one sin that you must help them against, but thousands; their name is Legion, for they are many. It is not one weed that must be pulled up, but the field is overspread with them. Secondly, And how hard is it to prevail against any one of them! They are hereditary diseases, bred in their natures: "Naturam expellas furca," &c. They are as near them as the very heart; and how tenacious are all things of that which is natural! How hard to teach a hare not to be fearful; or a lion or a tiger not to be fierce! Besides, the things you must teach them are quite above them; yea, and clean contrary to the interest and desires of their flesh: how hard is it to teach a man to be willing to be poor, and despised, and destroyed here for Christ; to deny themselves, and displease the flesh; to forgive an enemy; to love those that hate us; to watch against temptations; to avoid occasions and appearance of evil; to believe in a crucified Saviour; to rejoice in tribulation; to trust upon a bare word of promise, and let go all in hand, if called to it, for something in hope that they never saw, nor ever spake with man that did see; to make God their chief delight and love, and to have their hearts in heaven, while they live on earth; I think none of this is easy; they that think otherwise, let them try and judge: yet all this must be learned, or they are undone for ever. If you help them not to some trade, they cannot live in the world; but if

niter aut obiter, sed sedulo et cum authoritate inferiores ad Dei timorem et obedientiam adducendo, faciendum esse officium.—*Paræus in Gen.* xviii. 19.

they be destitute of these things, they shall not live in heaven. If the mariner be not skilful, he may be drowned; and if the soldier be not skilful, he may be slain; but they that cannot do the things above mentioned, will perish for ever, "for without holiness none shall see God." (Heb. xii. 14.) Oh, that the Lord would make all you that are parents sensible what a work and charge doth lie upon you! You that neglect this important work, and talk to your families of nothing but the world, I tell you the blood of souls lies on you; make as light of it as you will, if you repent not, and amend, the Lord will shortly call you to an account for your guiltiness of your children's everlasting undoing; and then you that could find in your hearts to neglect the souls of your own children, will be judged more barbarous than the Irish or Turks, that kill the children of others.

8. Consider also, What a world of sorrows do you prepare for yourselves, by the neglect of your children.[a]

First, You can expect no other but that they should be thorns in your very eyes, and you may thank yourselves if they prove so, seeing they are thorns of your own planting.

Secondly, If you should repent of this your negligence, and be saved yourselves, yet is it nothing to you to think of the damnation of your children? You know God hath said, "that except they be born again, they shall not enter into the kingdom of God." Methinks, then, it should be a heart-breaking to all you that have unregenerate children; methinks you should weep over them every time you look them in the face, to remember that they are in the way to eternal fire. Some people would lament the fate of their children, if but a wizard should foretell them some ill fortune to befall them, and do you not regard it when the living God shall tell you, "that the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all they that forget God." (Psal. ix. 17.)

Thirdly, Yet all this were not so doleful to you, if it were a thing that you had no hand in, or could do nothing to help; but to think that all this is much long of you! that ever your negligence should bring your child to these everlasting torments, which the very damned man (Luke xvi.) would have

[a] Think of Eli's sad example; though he did admonish them, yet it was out of season, he did it not soon enough; he suffered them to have their will too long; he dealt not with them till they were grown impudent in their sin, and all Israel rang of them.—*Borrh.* Neither was his admonition severe enough according to his authority.—*Willet in* 1 *Sam.* iii. 13. q. 6. p. 11.

had his brethren been warned to escape. If this seem light to thee, thou hast the heart of a hellish fiend in thee, and not of a man.[b]

Fourthly, But yet worse than all this will it prove to you if you die in this sin, for then you shall be miserable as well as they: and, oh, what a greeting will there be then between ungodly parents and children! What a hearing will it be to your tormented souls, to hear your children cry out against you: 'All this that we suffer was long of you; you should have taught us better, and did not; you should have restrained us from sin, and corrected us, but you did not; and what an addition will such outcries be to your misery!

9. On the other side, do but think with yourselves, what a world of comfort you may have if you be faithful in this duty. First, If you should not succeed, yet you have freed your own souls; and though it be sad, yet not so sad, for you may have peace in your own consciences. Secondly, But if you do succeed, the comfort is inexpressible. For First, Godly children will be truly loving to yourselves that are their parents; when a little riches, or matters of this world, will oft make ungodly children to cast off their very natural affection. 2. Godly children will be most obedient to you; they dare not disobey and provoke you, because of the command of God, except you should command them that which is unlawful, and then they must obey God rather than men. 3. And if you should fall into want, they would be most faithful in relieving you, as knowing they are tied by a double bond, of nature and of grace. 4. And they will also be helpers to your souls, and to your spiritual comforts; they will be delighting you with the mention of heaven, and with holy conference and actions; when wicked children will be grieving you with cursing, and swearing, or drunkenness, or disobedience. 5. Yea, when you are in trouble, or sickness, and at death, your godly children will be at hand to advise and to support you; they will strive with God in prayers for you; oh, what a comfort is it to a parent to have a child that hath the spirit of prayer and interest in God! How much good may they do you by their importunity with God! and what a sadness is it to have children, that when you lie sick, can do no more but ask you how you do; and look on you in your misery!

[b] Ut vinitor laboris onus et sumptus libenter sustinet; sic pater familias onus et curam et sumptus, et molestias, &c., quia spem habet fructuum.—*Wolfius in Psal.* cxviii. pp. (mihi) 131.

6. Yea, all your family may fare the better for one child or servant that feareth God; yea, perhaps all the town where he liveth: as Joseph's case proveth, and Jacob's, and many the like, when one wicked child may bring a judgment on your house. 7. And if God make you instruments of your children's conversion, you will have a share in all the good that they do through their lives; all the good they do to their brethren, or to the church of God, and all the honour they bring to God, will redound to your happiness as having been instruments of it. 8. And what a comfort may it be to you all your lives, to think that you shall live with them for ever with God! 9. But the greatest joy will be when you come to the possession of this, and you shall say, 'Here am I, and the children thou hast given me.' And are not all these comforts enough to persuade you to this duty?

10. Consider further, that the very welfare of church and state lieth mainly on this duty of well educating children; and without this, all other means are like to be far less successful. I seriously profess to you that I verily think all the sins and miseries of the land may acknowledge this sin for their great nurse and propagator. Oh, what happy churches might we have, if parents did their duties to their children! Then we need not exclude so many for ignorance or scandal, nor have our churches composed of members so rude. Then might we spare most of the quarrels about discipline, reformation, toleration, and separation: any reasonable government would do better with a well-taught people, than the best will do with the ungodly. It is not good laws and orders that will reform us, if the men be not good, and reformation begin not at home; when children go wicked from the hands of their parents; thence some come such to the universities, and so we come to have an ungodly ministry; and in every profession they bring this fruit of their education with them. When gentlemen[c] teach their children only to hunt, and hawk, and game, and deride the godly, what magistrates, and what parliaments, and so what government, and what a commonwealth, are we likely to have,

[c] See Charron's invective against unlearned gentlemen, lib. iii. c. 14. p. 500. Like Askham's of the English. Much more may be said against the irreligious. Parents are the first authors and cause of a commonwealth; to furnish a state with honest men and good citizens, the culture and good education of youth are necessary, which is the seed of a commonwealth. There comes not so much evil to a commonwealth by the ingratitude of children to the parents, as by the carelessness of parents in the instruction of their children; therefore, by great reason in Lacedæmon, and other good and

when all must be guided by such as these! Some perverse, inconsiderate persons lay the blame of all this on the ministers; that people of all sorts are so ignorant and profane; as if one man can do the work of many hundreds. I beseech you that are masters and parents, do your own duties, and free ministers from these unjust aspersions, and the church from her reproach and confusion. Have not ministers work enough of their own to do? Oh, that you knew what it is that lieth on them! And if, besides this, you will cast upon them the work of every master and parent in the parish, it is likely, indeed, to be well done. How many sorts of workmen must there be to the building of a house! And if all of them should cast it upon one, and themselves do nothing, you may judge how much were likely to be done. If there be three or four schoolmasters in a school, amongst three or four hundred scholars, and all the lower that should fit them for the higher schools, should do nothing at all but send all these scholars to the highest shoolmaster as ignorant as they received them, would not his life be a burden to him, and all the work be frustrated and spoiled? Why, so it is here. The first work towards the reforming and making happy of church and commonwealth, lies in the good education of your children; the most of this is your work; and if this be left undone, and then they come to ministers raw and ignorant, and hardened in their sins, alas! what can a minister do? Whereas, if they came trained up in the principles of religion, and the practice of godliness, and were taught the fear of God in their youth, O what an encouragement would it be to ministers! And how would the work go on in our hands! I tell you seriously, this is the cause of all our miseries and unreformedness in church and state, even the want of a holy education of children. Many lay the blame on this neglect and that, but there is none hath so great a hand in it as this. What a school must there needs be where all are brought raw, as I said, to the highest form! What a house must there needs be built, when clay is brought to the mason's hands instead of bricks! What a commonwealth

politic states, there was a punishment laid on the parents when the children were ill conditioned.—*Charron.* lib. iii. cap. 14. p. 490. Parents are doubly obliged to this duty; both because they are their children, and because they are the tender plants and hope of the commonwealth.—*Ibid.* The strength and continuance of a reformation lie not all in the magistrate, but in this: that the people receive the truth into them, and among them; who otherwise would be but as a hen in a coop, always looking to get out.—*M. Vines' Sermon on Num.* xiv. 24. p. 27.

may be expected if all the constables and justices should do nothing, but cast all upon king and parliament! And so, what a church may we expect, when all the parents and masters in the parish shall cast all their duty on their ministers! Alas! how long may we catechise them, and preach to them, before we can get them to understand the very principles of the faith! This, this is the cause of our church's deformities, and this is the cause of the present difficulty of reformation. It is in vain to contend about orders and discipline if the persons that live under it be not prepared. Perhaps you will say, 'The apostles had not their hearers thus prepared to their hands. Is not the word the first means of conversion?'

Answ. 1. The apostles preached to none at first but infidels and pagans. And are you no better? Will you do no more for your children than they?

2. All the success of their labours was to gather here and there a church from among the world of unbelievers. But now, the kingdoms of the world are become the kingdoms of the Lord and his Christ.

3. And yet the apostles were extraordinarily qualified for the work, and seconded it by miracles for the convincing of their hearers.

4. I do verily believe that if parents did their duty as they ought, the word publicly preached would not be the ordinary means of regeneration in the church, but only without the church, among infidels. Not that I believe Doctor Burgess and Mr. Bedford's doctrine of baptismal regeneration. But God would pour out his grace upon the children of his people, and hear prayers for them, and bless such endeavours for their holy education, that we should see the promises made good to our seed, and the unthankful Anabaptists, that will not confess that the children of the saints are any nearer God, or more beholden to him than pagans, so much as for the favour to be visible church members, should, by sweet experience, be convinced of their error, and be taught better how to understand that our children are holy.

11. I entreat you that are parents, also to consider what excellent advantages you have above all others for the saving of your children.

1. They are under your hands while they are young and tender, and flexible; but they come to ministers when they are grown elder, and stiffer, and settled in their ways, and think

themselves too good to be catechised, and too old to be taught.[d] You have a twig to bend, and we an oak. You have the young plants of sin to pluck up, and we the deep-rooted vices. The consciences of children are not so seared with a custom of sinning and long-resisting grace, as others. You have the soft and tender earth to plough in, and we have the hard and stony ways, that have been trodden on by many years' practice of evil. When they are young, their understandings are like a sheet of white paper, that hath nothing written on, and so you have opportunity to write what you will. But when they are grown up in sin, they are like the same paper written over with falsehoods, which must all be blotted out again, and truth written in the place. And how hard is that! We have a double task; first to unteach them, and then to teach them better, but you have but one. We must unteach them all that the world, and flesh, and wicked company, and the devil, have been diligently teaching them in many years' time. We have hardened hearts to beat on like a smith's anvil, that will not feel us; we may tell them of death and judgment, heaven and hell, and they hear us as if they were asleep or dead; you have the soft clay to mould, and we have the hardened burned bricks. You have them before they are possessed with prejudice and false conceits against the truth, but we have them to teach when they have many years lived among those that have scorned at godliness, and taught them to think God's ways to be foolish preciseness. Custom hath not ensnared and engaged our little ones to contrary ways, but of old sinners, the Lord himself hath said, "that if the Ethiopian can change his skin, and the leopard his spots, then may those that are accustomed to do evil, learn to do well." (Jer. xiii. 23.) Doth not the experience of all the world show you the power of education? What else makes all the children of the Jews to be Jews; and all the children of the Turks to be Mahometans; and of Christians to be in profession Christians; and of each sect or party in religion to follow their parents, and the custom of the place? Why now, what an ad-

[d] Nemo est omnium tam efficax ad liberos, vel servandos, vel perdendos, quam sunt ipsi parentes.—*Rolloc. in Col.* iii. 21. Ut aqua in areola digitum sequitur præcedentem; ita ætas mollis, flexibilis; et quocunque duxeris, trahitur.—*Hieron.* lib. ii. epist. 16. p. 201. Nobis qui sacramentum veræ religionis accepimus, cum sit veritas revelata divinitus, cum doctorem sapientiæ ducemque veritatis Deum sequamur; universos sine ullo discrimine, vel sexus, vel ætatis, ad cœleste pabulum convocamus.—*Lactant. Instit.* lib. i. c. 1,

vantage have you to use all this for the furtherance of their happiness, and possess them as strongly beforehand against sin, as else Satan would do for it; and so Satan should come to them upon some of those disadvantages that now Christ comes on.

2. Consider, also, That you have the affections of your children more than any others. None in the world hath that interest in their hearts as you. You will receive that counsel from an undoubted friend, that you would not do from an enemy, or a stranger. Why now, your children cannot choose but know that you are their friends, and advise them in love; and they cannot choose but love you again. Their love is loose and arbitrary to others, but to you it is determinate and fast. Nature hath almost necessitated them to love you. Oh, therefore, improve this your interest in them for their good.

3. You have also the greatest authority over them. You may command them, and they dare not disobey you; or else it is your own fault, for the most part, for you can make them obey you in your business in the world; yea, you may correct them to enforce obedience. Your authority also is the most unquestioned authority in the world. The authority of kings and parliament has been disputed, but yours is past dispute. And therefore, if you use it not to constrain them to the works of God, you are without excuse.

4. Besides, their whole dependence is on you for their maintenance and livelihood. They know you can either give them or deny them what you have, and so punish and reward them at your pleasure. But on ministers or neighbours they have no such dependence.

5. Moreover, you that are parents know the temper and inclinations of your children, what vices they are most inclined to, and what instruction or reproof they most need, but ministers that live more strange to them, cannot know this.

6. Above all, you are ever with them, and so have opportunity as to know their faults, so to apply the remedy. You may be still talking to them of the word of God, and minding them of their state and duty, and may follow and set home every word of advice, as they are in the house with you, or in the shop, or in the field at work. Oh, what an excellent advantage is this, if God do but give you hearts to use it. Especially you, mothers,[e]

[e] Magna hic matribus fidis vitanda est molestia, nec audiendum quod affectus, sed quod ratio et pietas dictabit.—*Bullin. in* 1 *Tim.* iii. 11.

remember this; you are more with your children while they are little ones than their fathers; be you therefore still teaching them as soon as ever they are capable of learning. You cannot do God such eminent service yourselves as men, but you may train up children that may do it, and then you will have part of the comfort and honour. Bathsheba had part of the honour of Solomon's wisdom; (Prov. xxxi. 1;) for she taught him; and Timothy's mother and grandmother, of his piety. Plutarch speaks of a Spartan woman, that when her neighbours were showing their apparel and jewels, she brought out her children virtuous and well taught, and said, "These are my ornaments and jewels." Oh, how much more will this adorn you than your bravery! What a deal of pains you are at with the bodies of your children more than the fathers, and what do you suffer to bring them into the world; and will not you be at as much pains for the saving their souls? You are naturally of more tender affections than men; and will it not move you to think that your children should perish for ever? Oh, therefore, I beseech you, for the sake of the children of your bowels, teach them, admonish them, watch over them, and give them no rest till you have brought them over to Christ.

And thus I have showed you reason enough to make you diligent in teaching your children, if reason will serve, as methinks among reasonable creatures it should do.

Sect. XII. Let us next hear what is usually objected against this by negligent men.

Object. 1. We do not see but those children prove as bad as others that are taught the Scriptures, and brought up so holily; and those prove as honest men and good neighbours, that have none of this ado with them.

Answ. Oh, who art thou, man, that disputest against God? Hath God charged you to teach your children diligently his word,[1] speaking of it as you sit at home, and as you walk abroad, as you lie down, and as you rise up; (Deut. vi. 6—8;) and dare you reply that it is as good to let it alone? Why, this is to set God at defiance, and, as it were, to spit in his face, and give him the lie. Will you take it well at your servants, if, when you command them to do a thing, they should return you such an answer that they do not see but it were as good to let it alone? Wretched worm! Darest thou thus lift up thy head

[1] Præter publicam doctrinam etiam privata catechizatio domesticorum vigere debet inter nos ex Dei mandato.—*Pareus in Gen.* xviii. 19.

against the Lord that made thee, and must judge thee? Is it not he that commandeth thee? If thou dost not believe that this Scripture is the word of God, thou dost not believe in Jesus Christ: for thou hast nothing else to tell thee that there is a Christ. And if thou do believe that this is his word, how darest thou say, 'It is as good disobey it?' This is devilish pride indeed when such sottish, sinful dust shall think themselves wiser than the living God, and take upon them to reprove and cancel his word.[g]

2. But, alas! you know not what honesty is when you say that the ignorant are as honest as others. You think those are the honestest men that best please you, but I know those are the most honest that best please God. Christ saith, in Luke viii. 15, that an honest heart is that which keepeth the word of God; and you say, they are as honest that reject it. God made men to please himself, and not to please you; and you may know by his laws who please him best. The commandments have two tables, and the first is, "Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy heart;" and the second, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." First seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness. (Matt. vi. 33.)

3. And what if some prove naught that are well brought up? it is not the generality of them. Will you say that Noah's family was no better than the drowned world, because there was one Cham in it; nor David's, because there was one Absalom; nor Christ's, because there was one Judas?

4. But what if it were so: have men need of the less teaching, or the more? You have more wit in the matters of this world. You will not say, 'I see many labour hard, and yet are poor, and therefore it is as good never to labour at all;' you will not say, 'Many that go to school learn nothing, and therefore they may learn as much though they never go:[h] or many that are great tradesmen break, and therefore it is as good never trade at all: or many great eaters are as lean as others, and many sick men recover no strength though they eat, and there-

[g] Qui vel frigide de pietatis studiis ipsi sentiunt, vel aliis autores sunt, ut à teneris unguiculis quam diligentissime in religione suos institui negligant, videant quid velint olim Christo Domino respondere, qui per os sacrum Pauli pueris commendat sacrarum literarum studium.—*Hemming. in Eph.* vi. 4.

[h] Verum, bone Deus, quam paucos hodie reperias qui tam sint soliciti quomodo post se, recte et honeste vivant filii, quam curant ut amplam illis hæreditatem relinquant, qua post obitum ipsorum splendide et otiose delicientur! —*Musc. in Gen.* xviii. 19. p. (mihi) 427.

fore it is as good for men never to eat more: or many plough and sow, and have nothing come up, and therefore it is as good never to plough more.' What a fool were he that should reason thus! And is he not a thousand times worse that shall reason thus for men's souls? Peter reasons the clean contrary way, "If the righteous be scarcely saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" (1 Pet. iv. 18.) And so doth Christ, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate, for many shall seek to enter, and not be able." (Luke xiii. 24.) Other men's miscarriages should quicken our diligence, and not make us cast away all. What would you think of that man that should look over into his neighbour's garden, and because he sees here and there a nettle or weed among much better stuff, should say, 'Why, you may see these men that bestow so much pains in digging and weeding, have weeds in their garden as well as I that do nothing, and therefore who would be at so much pains?' Just thus doth the mad world talk; you may see now that those that pray, and read, and follow sermons, have their faults as well as we, and have wicked persons among them as well as we. Yea, but that is not the whole garden, as yours is; it is but here and there a weed, and as soon as they spy it, they pluck it up, and cast it away.

But, however, if such men be as wicked as you imagine, can you for shame lay the fault upon the Scripture, or ordinances of God? Do they find any thing in the Scriptures to encourage them to sin? You may far better say 'It is wrong of the judge and the law which hangs them, that there are so many thieves.' Did you ever read a word for sin in the Scripture; or ever hear a minister or godly man persuade people to sin, or from it rather? I speak not of sectaries, who usually grow to be enemies to Scripture. Lord, what horrible impudence is in the faces of ungodly men! When a minister hath spent himself in studying and persuading his people from sin, or when parents have done all they can to reform their children, yet people will say, 'It is long of this that they are so bad.' What! will reproving and correcting for sin bring them soonest to it? I dare challenge any man breathing, to name any one ruler that ever was in the world, that was so severe against sin as Jesus Christ; or to show me any law that ever was made in the world so severe against sin as the laws of God? And yet it must be long of Christ and Scripture that men are evil! When he threateneth damnation against impenitent sinners, it is yet

long of him. Yea, see how these wicked men contradict themselves! What is it that they hate the Scripture for, but that it is so strict and precise, and forbids them their pleasures and fleshly liberties, that is their sins? And yet if any fall into sin, they will blame the Scripture, that forbids it. I know in these late years of licentiousness and apostacy, many that talk much of religion, prove guilty of grievous crimes, but then they turn away so far from Christ and Scripture. As bad as the godly are, I dare yet challenge you to show me any society under heaven like them that most study and delight in the Scriptures; or any school, like the scholars of Christ. Because parents cannot, by all their diligence, get their children to be as good as they should be, shall they therefore leave them to be as bad as they will? Because they cannot get them to be perfect saints, shall they therefore leave them to be as incarnate devils? Certainly, your children untaught will be little better.[i]

Sect. XIII. 2. Some will further object, and say, It is the work of ministers to teach both us and our children, and therefore we may be excused.

Answ. 1. It is first your duty, and then the ministers'; It will be no excuse for you, because it is their work, except you could prove it were only theirs: magistrates must govern both you and your children: doth it therefore follow that you must not govern them? It belongs to the schoolmaster to correct them, and doth it not belong also to you? There must go many hands to this great work, as to the building of a house there must be many workmen, one to one part, and another to another; and as your corn must go through many hands before it be bread: the reaper's, the thresher's, the miller's, the baker's; and one must not leave their part, and say, It belongs to the other: so it is here in the instructing of your children: first, you must do your work, and then the minister do his; you must be doing it privately night and day; the minister must do it publicly, and privately as oft as he can.[k]

2. But as the case now stands with the ministers of England, they are disabled from doing that which belongs to their office,

[i] Liberi prudenter et diligenter educati sunt optimi; et parentes cum ornare tum juvare possunt.—*Wolf. in Psal.* cxxviii. *Homil.* 153. p. 131. B. c. 9.

[k] Familiæ patrum erant domesticæ ecclesiæ; pastores, sacerdotes, et doctores, erant parentes; liberi et domestici erant catechumeni, discentes doctrinam de Deo, creatione, de lapsu et peccato, de ira et judiciis Dei adversus peccata, de gratia et misericordia Dei, de Messia venturo, et reparatione humani generis per eum, &c.—*Pareus in Gen.* xviii. 19.

and therefore you cannot now cast your work on them. I will instance but in two things. First, It belongs to their office to govern the church, and to teach with authority; and great and small are commanded to obey them. (Heb. iii. 7, 17, &c.) But now this is unknown, and hearers look on themselves as freemen, that may obey or not, at their own pleasure: a parent's teaching which is with authority, will take more than one's that is taken to have none: people think we have authority to speak to them when they please to hear, and no more. Nay, few of the godly themselves do understand the authority that their teachers have over them from Christ: they know how to value a minister's gifts, but not how they are bound to learn of him, and obey him because of his office. Not that they should obey him in evil, nor that he should be a final decider of all controversies, nor should exercise his authority in things of no moment; but as a schoolmaster may command his scholars when to come to school, and what book to read, and what form to be of; and as they ought to obey him, and to learn of him, and not to set their wits against his, but to take his word, and believe him as their teacher, till they understand as well as he, and are ready to leave his school;[1] just so are people bound to obey and learn of their teachers, and to take their words while they are learners, in that which is beyond their present capacity, till they are able to see things in their proper evidence. Now this ministerial authority is unknown, and so ministers are the less capable of doing their work, which comes to pass, First, From the pride of man's nature, especially novices, which makes men impatient of the reins of guidance and command; Secondly, From the popish error of implicit faith; to avoid which we are driven as far into the contrary extreme; Thirdly, And from the modesty of ministers that are loth to show their commission, and make known their authority, lest they should be thought proud. As if a schoolmaster should let his scholars do what they list; or a pilot let the seamen run the ship whither they will, for fear of being thought proud in exercising their authority. Secondly, But a far greater clog than this yet doth lie upon the ministers, which few take notice of; and that is, the fewness of ministers, and the greatness of congregations. In the apostles' time

[1] Nemo existimet parochorum tantum esse, et præceptorum, teneros puerorum animos pietatis doctrina imbuere; verum etiam id multo magis parentum; quorum interest una cum lacte, in eos semina pietatis jacere, modo contumaces erga Deum haberi nolint.—*Hemingius in Eph.* vi. 4.

every church had a multitude of ministers, and so it must be again, or we shall never come near that primitive pattern; and then they could preach publicly, and from house to house. But now, when there is but one or two ministers to many thousand souls, we cannot so much as know them, much less teach them one by one: it is as much as we can do to discharge the public work. So that you see, you have little reason to cast your work on the ministers, but should the more help them by your diligence, in your several families, because they are already so over burdened.

Sect. XIV. 3. But some will say, 'We are poor men, and must labour for our living, and so must our children, and cannot have while to teach them the Scriptures, we have somewhat else for them to do.'

Answ. And are not poor men subject to God, as well as rich; and are they not Christians: and must they not give account of their ways; and have not your children souls to save or lose, as well as the rich? Cannot you have while to speak to them as they are at their work? Have you not time to instruct them on the Lord's-day? You can find time to talk idly, as poor as you are, and can you find no time to talk of the way to life? You can find time on the Lord's-day for your children to play, or walk or talk in the streets, but no time to mind the life to come.[m] Methinks you should rather say to your children, 'I have no lands or lordships to leave you, nothing but hard labour and poverty in the world; you have no hope of great matters here, be sure therefore to make the Lord your portion, and to get interest in Christ, that you may be happy hereafter: if you could get riches, they would shortly leave you, but the riches of grace and glory will be everlasting.' Methinks you should say as Peter, "Silver and gold I have none, but such as I have I give you." The kingdoms of the world cannot be had by beggars, but the kingdom of heaven may. O what a terrible reckoning will many poor men have, when Christ shall plead his cause, and judge them! May not he say, 'I made the way to worldly honours inaccessible to you, that you might not look

[m] Crates cried out in anger "To what end do men take so much care in heaping up goods, and so little care of those to whom they shall leave them? What should he do with riches that is not wise, and knows not how to use them? It is as if a man should take care of his shoe, and not of his foot; or set a rich saddle on a jade's back."—*Charron.* lib. iii. p. 491. Plato saith, he knew not in what a man should be more careful and diligent than to make a good son.—*Ibid.*

after it for yourselves, or your children; but heaven I set open, that you might have nothing to discourage you; I confined riches and honour to a few, but my blood and salvation I offered to all, that none may say, I was not invited; I tendered heaven to the poor, as well as the rich; I made no exception against the meanest beggar, that did not wilfully shut out themselves: why then did you not come yourselves, and bring your children, and teach them the way to the eternal inheritance? Do you say, you were poor? Why, I did not set heaven to sale for money, but I called those that had nothing, to take it freely; only on condition they would take me for their Saviour and Lord, and give up themselves unfeignedly to me in obedience and love.' What can you answer Christ, when he shall thus convince you? It is not enough, that your children are poor and miserable here, but you would have them be worse for everlasting too! If your children were beggars, yet if they were such beggars as Lazarus, they may be conveyed by angels into the presence of God. But believe it, as God will save no man because he is a gentleman, so will he save no man because he is a beggar. God hath so ordered it in his providence, that riches are exceeding occasions of men's damnation, and will you think poverty a sufficient excuse? The hardest point in all our work is to be weaned from the world, and in love with heaven; and if you will not be weaned from it, who have nothing in it but labour and sorrow, you have no excuse. The poor cannot have while, and the rich will not have while, or they are ashamed to be so forward: the young think it too soon, and the old too late: and thus most men, instead of being saved, have somewhat to say against their salvation: and when Christ sendeth to invite them, they say, 'I pray thee have me excused;' O unworthy guests of such a blessed feast, and most worthy to be turned into the everlasting burnings!

Sect. XV. 4. But some will object, We have been brought up in ignorance ourselves, and therefore we are unable to teach our children.

Answ. Indeed this is the very sore of the land: but is it not pity that men should so receive their destruction by tradition? Would you have this course to go on thus still? Your parents did not teach you, and therefore you cannot teach your children, and therefore they cannot teach theirs: by this course the knowledge of God should be banished out of the world, and never be recovered. But if your parents did not teach you, why did not

you learn when you came to age? The truth is, you had no hearts to it; for he that hath not knowledge, cannot value it, or love it. But yet, though you have greatly sinned, it is not too late, if you will but follow my faithful advice in these four points:

1. Get your hearts deeply sensible of your own sin and misery, because of this long time which you have spent in ignorance and neglect. Bethink yourselves sometimes when you are alone; did not God make you, and sustain you for his service? Should not he have had the youth and strength of your spirits? Did you live all this while at the door of eternity? What, if you had died in ignorance, where had you been then? What a deal of time have you spent to little purpose! Your life is near done, and your work all undone. You are ready to die, before you have learned to live. Should not God have had a better share of your lives, and your souls been more duly regarded and provided for? In the midst of these thoughts, cast down yourselves in sorrow, as at the feet of Christ; bewail your folly, and beg pardon, and recovering grace.

2. Then think as seriously how you have wronged your children; if an unthrift, that hath sold all his lands, will lament it for his children's sake, as well as his own, much more should you.

3. Next set presently to work, and learn yourselves. If you can read, do; if you cannot, get some that can; and be much among those that will instruct and help you; be not ashamed to be seen among learners, though it be to be catechised, but be ashamed that you had not learned sooner. God forbid you should be so mad, as to say, I am now too old to learn: except you be too old to serve God, and be saved, how can you be too old to learn to be saved? Why not rather, I am too old to serve the devil and the world, I have tried them too long to trust them any more. What if your parents had not taught you any trade to live by; or what if they had never taught you to speak; would not you have set yourselves to learn, when you had come to age? Remember, that you have souls to care for, as well as your children, and therefore first begin with yourselves.[n]

4. In the mean time while you are learning yourselves, teach your children what you do know: and what you cannot teach

[n] Job ita regebat filios suos ut tam pro præsentibus criminibus, quam pro occultis in corde peccatis, quæ hominum fugere notitiam possunt, divinam clementiam assiduis sacrificiis exoraret.—*Hieronym. in Job* i.

them yourselves, put them on to learn it of others that can: persuade them into the company of the godly, who will be glad to instruct them. If Frenchmen or Welshmen lived in the town among us, that could not understand our language, would they not converse with those that do understand it? and would they not daily send their children to learn it, by being in the company of those that speak it? So do you, that you may learn the heavenly language: get among those that use it, and encourage your children to do so: have you no godly neighbours that will be helpful to you herein? O do not keep yourselves strange to them, but go among them, and desire their help; and be thankful to them, that they will entertain you into their company. God forbid you should be like those that Christ speaks of, (Luke xi. 52,) that would neither enter into the kingdom of God themselves, nor suffer those that would to enter. God forbid you should be such cruel, barbarous wretches, as to hinder your children from being godly, and to teach them to be wicked![*] And yet, alas! how many such are there swarming every where among us? If God do but touch the heart of their children or servants, and cause them to hear and read the word, and call upon him, and accompany with the godly, who will sooner scorn them, and revile them, and discourage them, than an ungodly parent? What, say they, 'You will now be one of the holy brethren! You will be wiser than your parents!' Just such as Pharaoh was to the Israelites, such are these wicked wretches to their own children, (Exod. v. 3, 8, 9,) when Moses said, "Let us go sacrifice to the Lord, lest he fall upon us with pestilence or sword," &c. Pharaoh answers, "They are idle, therefore they say, Let us go sacrifice: lay more work upon them," &c. Just so do these people say to their children. You know Pharaoh was the representer of the devil, and yet let me tell you, these ungodly parents are far worse that Pharaoh: for the children of Israel were many thousands, and were to go three days' journey out of the land, but these men hinder their children from serving God at home: Pharaoh was not their father, but their king; but these men are enemies to the children

[*] Adolescentiores etiam invitos, parentes ministris ecclesiæ sistant, ut de fide et oratione Christianorum, deque præceptis decalogi et gratiæ Christi sacramentis interrogati respondentes instruantur; et si qua in re culpabiles fuerint, ad judicia majorum corrigantur, et ad studium pietatis incitentur, et ad dominicæ mensæ communionem nisi explorati non admittantur.—*Musculus in Matt.* ii. tom. 1. p. 26.

them by your own example, as well as by your words. Be yourselves such as you would have them be: practice is the most effectual teaching of children, who are addicted to imitation, especially of their parents. Lead them the way to prayer, and reading, and other duties: be not like base commanders, that will put on their soldiers, but not go on themselves. Can you expect your children should be wiser or better than you? Let them not hear those words out of your mouths, nor see those practices in your lives, which you reprove in them. No man shall be saved because his children are godly, if he be ungodly himself. Who should lead the way in holiness, but the father and master of the family? It is a sad time when he must be accounted a good master or father that will not hinder his family from serving God, but will give them leave to go to heaven without him.

I will but name the rest of your direct duty for your family. You must help to inform their understandings. 2. To store their memories. 3. To rectify their wills. 4. To quicken their affections. 5. To keep tender their consciences. 6. To restrain their tongues, and help them to skill in gracious speech; and to reform and watch over their outward conversation.

To these ends, 1. Be sure to keep them, at least, so long at school till they can read English. It is a thousand pities that a reasonable creature should look upon a Bible as upon a stone, or a piece of wood. 2. Get them Bibles and good books, and see that they read them. 3. Examine them often what they learn. 4. Especially bestow the Lord's-day in this work, and see that they spend it not in sports or idleness. 5. Show them the meaning of what they read and learn. (Josh. iv. 6, 21, 22; Psal. lxxviii. 4—6, and xxxiv. 11.) 6. Acquaint them with the godly, and keep them in good company, where they may learn good, and keep them out of that company that would teach them evil. 7. Be sure to cause them to learn some catechism containing the chief heads of divinity.

Sect. XVII. These heads of divinity, which you must teach them first, are these: [a]

[a] Nil enim fide Christiana iniquius esset si in doctos solum et artibus hisce excultos competeret.—*Nazianzen*, orat. 21. *referente Davenantio Adhort. pro Pace*, p. 85. Si quis seponeret totam quæ hoc seculo nostro viget controversam theologiam, atque in unum corpus colligeret illos Christianæ doctrinæ articulos, de quibus bene convenit inter universas ecclesias, quæ Christum Σώτηρον colunt et pro servatore suo agnoscunt, posse Christianos in illi tantum salutiferæ veritatis et scientiæ invenire, quantum credentibus sufficere

1. That there is one only God, who is a Spirit invisible, infinite, eternal, almighty, good, merciful, true, just, holy, &c. 2. That this God is one in three, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. 3. That he is the Maker, Maintainer, and Lord of all. 4. That man's happiness consisteth in the enjoying of this God, and not in fleshly pleasure, profits, or honours. 5. That God made the first man upright and happy, and gave him a law to keep, with condition, that if he kept it perfectly, he should live happy for ever, but if he broke it he should die. 6. That man broke this law, and so forfeited his welfare, and became guilty of death as to himself and all his posterity. 7. That Christ the Son of God did here interpose, and prevent the full execution, undertaking to die instead of man, and so to redeem him; whereupon all things were delivered into his hands as the Redeemer, and he is under that relation the Lord of all. 8. That Christ hereupon did make with man a better covenant or law, which proclaimed pardon of sin to all that did but repent, and believe, and obey sincerely. 9. That he revealed this covenant and mercy to the world by degrees; first, in darker promises, prophecies, and sacrifices; then, in many ceremonious types; and then, by more plain foretelling by the prophets.

posset ad consecutionem vitæ æternæ; si ad cognitionem accesserit obedientia, et studium sanctitatis.—*Usserius Armachan. in Conc. coram Rege*, p. 28, *referente Davenantio ubi sup.* 84. That the Creed, in the beginning, contained only the profession of belief in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, taken from Matt. xxviii. 19, and how it was, in time, by degrees, enlarged. See it excellently handled by those excellent, learned, judicious, pious divines, Sandford and Parker, in that most learned treatise 'De Descensu Christi,' lib. iv. initio, præcipue pp. 5, 6, ad 50. Ecclesia per universum orbem disseminata hanc fidem ab apostolis accepit, atque diligenter custodit: per consensum in hac fide quasi unam domum inhabitat, et unam animam habet. —*Irenæus*, lib. i. cap. 2, 3. Vide plura testimonia pro sufficientia symboli in Davenantii Adhort. ad Pacem, pp. 93—95. Et in Parkero de Descens. Et in Conrad. Bergio fere per totam Prax. Cathol. Canon. Una definitio fidei est, confiteri, et recte glorificare Patrem, et Christum Filium Dei, et Spiritum Sanctum. Istam confessionem conservamus, in qua et baptizati sumus; donatam quidem à magno Deo servatore nostro Jesu Christo sanctis suis discipulis et apostolis: ab iis autem confessionem, i. e. sanctum mathema et symbolum fidei, 318. sancti patres in Nicea collecti tradiderunt.—*Justinian Imper. in Act. Concil. Tolet.* i. Sicut hæretici in moribus, omnes rimas cavillandi indagantes, in causa fuerunt, ut contractus instrumenta, olim compendiosa, in infinitas conditiones, clausulas, et provisiones jam hodie extendantur; sic illud paetum in baptismo inter Christianum et Deum suum in hac brevitate tum sufficiebat. Hæretici vero in fide curiosis dubitationibus, perversitque altercationibus occasionem dederunt explicationis cujusdam magis popularis illius symboli, quod antea in majestate quasi sua complicatum fuerat.—*Doctr. Parker. de Descendu*, lib. iv. p. 9. Read also of this, honest Bishop Hall's book called 'The Peacemaker.'

10. That in the fulness of time Christ came and took our nature unto union with his godhead, being conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary. 11. That while he was on earth he lived a life of sorrows, was crowned with thorns, and bore the pains that our sins deserved; at last, being crucified to death, and buried, so satisfied the justice of God. 12. That he also preached himself to the Jews, and by constant miracles did prove the truth of his doctrine and mediatorship before thousands of witnesses; that he revealed more fully his new law or covenant; that whosoever will believe in him, and accept him for Saviour and Lord, shall be pardoned and saved, and have a far greater glory than they lost; and they that will not, shall lie under the curse and guilt, and be condemed to the everlasting fire of hell. 13. That he rose again from the dead, having conquered death, and took fuller possession of his dominion over all, and so ascended up into heaven, and there reigneth in glory. 14. That before his ascension he gave charge to his apostles to preach the foresaid Gospel to all nations and persons, and to offer Christ, and mercy, and life, to every one without exception, and to entreat and persuade them to receive him; and that he gave them authority to send forth others on the same message, and to baptize, and to gather churches, and confirm and order them, and settle a course for a succession of ministers and ordinances to the end of the world. 15. That he also gave them power to work frequent and evident miracles for the confirmation of their doctrine, and the convincing of the world; and to annex their writings to the rest of the Scriptures, and to finish and seal them up, and deliver them to the world as his infallible word and laws, which none must dare to alter, and which all must observe. 16. That though his free grace is offered to the world, yet the heart is by nature so desperately wicked, that no man will believe and entertain Christ sincerely, except by an almighty power he be changed and born again; and therefore doth Christ send forth his Spirit with his word, which secretly and effectually worketh holiness in the hearts of the elect, drawing them to God and the Redeemer. 17. That the means by which Christ worketh and preserveth this grace, is the word read and preached, together with frequent fervent prayer, meditation, sacraments, gracious conference; and it is much furthered also by special providences keeping us from temptation, fitting occurrences to our advantage, drawing us by mercies, and driving us by afflictions; and therefore it must be

the great and daily care of every Christian to use faithfully all the said ordinances, and improve the said providences. 18. That though the new law or covenant be an easy yoke, and there is nothing grievous in Christ's commands, yet so bad are our hearts, and so strong our temptations, and so diligent our enemies, that whosoever will be saved, he must strive, and watch, and bestow his utmost care and pains, and deny his flesh, and forsake all that would draw him from Christ, and herein continue to the end, and overcome. And because this cannot be done without continual supplies of grace, whereof Christ is the only fountain, therefore we must live in continual dependence on him by faith, and know that our life is hid with God in him. 19. That Christ will thus by his word and Spirit gather him a church of all the elect out of the world, which is his body, and spouse, and he their head and husband, and will be tender of them as the apple of his eyes, and preserve them from danger, and continue among them his presence and ordinances; and that the members of this church must live together in most entire love and peace, delighting themselves in God and his worship, and the forethoughts and mention of their everlasting happiness; forbearing and forgiving one another, and relieving each other in need, as if that which they have were their brother's. And all men ought to strive to be of this society. Yet will the visible churches be mixed of good and bad. 20. That when the full number of these elect are called home, Christ will come down from heaven again, and raise all the dead, and set them before him to be judged; and all that have loved God above all, and believed in Christ, and been willing that he should reign over them, and have improved their mercies in the day of grace, them he will justify, and sentence them to inherit the everlasting kingdom of glory; and those that were not such, he will condemn to everlasting fire: both which sentences shall be then executed accordingly.

This is the creed, or brief sum, of the doctrine which you must teach your children. Though our ordinary creed, called the apostles' creed, contains all the absolute fundamentals; yet in some it is so generally and darkly expressed, that an explication is necessary.

Sect. XVIII. Then, for matter of practice, teach them the meaning of the commandments,[t] especially of the great

[t] Νουθησία in genere talem admonitionem notat, qua alicui veluti in animum ponas ac ingeras quid factu opus sit.—*Hemingius in Eph.* vi. 4.

commands of the Gospel; show them what is commanded and forbidden, in the first table and in the second, towards God and men, in regard of the inward and the outward man; and here show them, 1. The authority commanding; that is, the Almighty God, by Christ the Redeemer. They are not now to look at the command as coming from God immediately, merely as God, or the Creator, but as coming from God by Christ the Mediator, who is now the Lord of all, and only lawgiver; seeing the Father now judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son. (John v. 21—24.) 2. Show them the terms on which duty is required, and the ends of it. 3. And the nature of duties, and the way to perform them aright. 4. And the right order; that they first love God above all, and then their neighbour: first seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness. 5. Show them the excellences and delights of God's service. 6. And the flat necessity. 7. Especially labour to get all to their hearts, and teach them not only to speak the words.

And for sin, show them its evil and danger, and watch over them against it. Especially, 1. The sins that youth is commonly addicted to. 2. And which their nature and constitution most lead them to. 3. And which the time and place do most strongly tempt to. 4. But especially be sure to kill their killing sins; those that all are prone to, and are of all most deadly: as, pride, worldliness, ignorance, profaneness, and flesh-pleasing.

And for the manner, you must do all this: 1. Betimes, before sin get rooting. 2. Frequently. 3. Seasonably. 4. Seriously and diligently. 5. Affectionately and tenderly. 6. And with authority; compelling where commanding will not serve, and adding correction where instruction is frustrate.

And thus I have done with the use of exhortation to do our utmost for the salvation of others. The Lord give men compassionate hearts that it may be practised: and then, I doubt not, but he will succeed it to the increase of his church.

THE

SAINT'S EVERLASTING REST.

THE FOURTH PART.

CONTAINING

A DIRECTORY FOR THE GETTING AND KEEPING OF THE HEART IN HEAVEN,

By the Diligent Practice of that excellent unknown Duty of Heavenly Meditation. Being the main thing intended by the Author in the writing of this Book, and to which all the rest is but subservient.

TO

MY DEARLY BELOVED FRIENDS IN THE LORD,

THE

INHABITANTS OF THE TOWN OF SHREWSBURY,

BOTH MAGISTRATES, MINISTERS, AND PEOPLE,

As also of the neighbouring Parts,

RICHARD BAXTER devoteth this part of this Treatise as a testimony of his love to his native soil, and to his many godly and faithful friends there living;

HEARTILY praying the Lord and Head of the Church to keep them in unity, peace, humility, vigilancy, and steadfastness in the truth; and to cause them to contribute their utmost endeavours for the setting up of able, faithful teachers, and building up the House of God, which hath so long been neglected, and which hath now so many hands employed to divide and demolish it: and that the Lord would save them in this hour of temptation, that they may be approved in this trial, and not be found light when God shall weigh them: and that he would acquaint them with the daily serious exercise of this most precious, spiritual, soul-exalting work of heavenly meditation, and that when the Lord shall come, he may find them so doing.

THE

INTRODUCTION.

In the former part, I have chiefly pressed those duties which must be used for the attainment of this everlasting rest. In this I shall chiefly handle those which are necessary to raise the heart to God, and to a heavenly and comfortable life on earth. It is a truth too evident, which an inconsiderate zealot reprehended in Master Culverwell as an error, that many of God's children do not enjoy that sweet life and blessed estate in this world, which God their Father hath provided for them; that is, which he offereth them in his promises, and chargeth upon them as their duty in his precepts, and bringeth even to their hands in all his means and mercies. God hath set open heaven to us in his word, and told every humble, sincere Christian that they shall shortly there live with himself in inconceivable glory; and yet, where is the person that is affected with this promise; whose heart leaps for joy at the hearing of the news; or that is willing, in hopes of heaven, to leave this world? But even the godly have as strange unsavoury thoughts of it, as if God did but delude us, and there were no such glory; and are almost as loth to die as men without hope. The consideration of this strange disagreement between our professions and affections, caused me to suspect that there was some secret, lurking unbelief in all our hearts; and therefore I wrote those arguments in the second part, for the divine authority of the Scripture: and because I find another cause to be, the carelessness, forgetfulness, and idleness of the soul, and not keeping in action that faith which we have, I have here attempted the removal of that cause, by prescribing a course for the daily acting of those graces which must fetch in the celestial delights into the heart.

Oh! the princely, joyful, blessed life, that the godly lose through mere idleness! As the papists have wronged the merits of Christ by their ascribing too much to our own works, so it is almost incredible, how much they, on the other extreme, have wronged the safety and consolation of men's souls, by telling them that their own endeavours are only for obedience and gratitude, but are not so much as conditions of their salvation, or means of their increased sanctification or consolation. And while some tell them that they must look at nothing in themselves, for acceptation with God, or comfort, and so make that acceptance and comfort to be equally belonging to a Christian and a Turk; and others tell them that they must look at nothing in themselves, but only as signs of their good estates; this hath caused some to expect only enthusiastic consolation, and others to spend their days in inquiring after signs of their sincerity. Had these poor souls well understood that God's way to persuade their wills, and to excite and actuate their affections, is by the discourse, reasoning, or consideration of their understandings, upon the nature and qualifications of the objects which are presented to them: and had they bestowed but that time in exercising holy affections, and in serious thoughts of the promised happiness, which they have spent in inquiring only after signs, I am confident, according to the ordinary working of God, they would have been better provided, both with assurance and with joys: How should the heir of a kingdom have the comfort of his title, but by fore-thinking on it? It is true, God must give us our comforts by his Spirit: but how? By quickening up our souls to believe, and consider of the promised glory; and not by comforting us, we know not how, nor why: or by giving men the foretastes of heaven, when they never think of it.

I have here prescribed thee, reader, the delightfulest task to the spirit, and the most tedious to the flesh, that ever men on earth were employed in. I did it first only for myself, but am loth to conceal the means that I have found so consolatory. If thou be one that wilt not be persuaded to a course so laborious, but wilt only go on in thy task of common formal duties, thou mayest let it alone, and so be destitute of delights, except such as the world and thy forms can afford thee; but then, do not, for shame, complain for want of comfort, when thou dost wilfully reject it: and be not such a hypocrite as to pray for it,

while thou dost refuse to labour for it. If thou say thy comfort is all in Christ, I must tell thee it is a Christ remembered and loved, and not a Christ forgotten or only talked of, that will solidly comfort. Though the directory for contemplation was only intended for this part, yet I have now premised two other uses. The heart must be taken off from resting on earth before it will be fit to converse above. The first part of saving religion, is the taking God only for our end and rest.

THE

SAINT'S EVERLASTING REST.

THE FOURTH PART.

CHAP. I.

Use. VI.—*Reproving our Expectations of Rest on Earth.*

Sect. I. Doth this rest remain? How great, then, is our sin and folly to seek and expect it here? Where shall we find the Christian that deserves not this reproof? Surely, we may all cry 'Guilty!' to this accusation. We know not how to enjoy convenient houses, goods, lands, and revenues, but we seek rest in these enjoyments. We seldom, I fear, have such sweet and heart-contenting thoughts of God and glory, as we have of our earthly delights. How much rest do the voluptuous seek, in buildings, walks, apparel, ease, recreation, sleep, pleasing meats and drinks, merry company, health and strength, and long life! Nay, we can scarce enjoy the necessary means which God hath appointed for our spiritual good, but we are seeking rest in them. Do we want ministers, godly society, or the like helps? Oh! think we, if it were but thus and thus with us, we were well. Do we enjoy them?[a] Oh! how we settle upon them, and bless ourselves in them, as the rich fool in his wealth? Our books, our preachers, sermons, friends, abilities for duty, do not our hearts hug them, and quiet themselves in them, even more than in God? Indeed, in words we disclaim it, and God hath usually the pre-eminence in our tongues and professions; but it is too apparent that it is otherwise in our hearts, by these discoveries: First, Do we not desire these more violently, when we want them, than we do the Lord himself? Do we not cry out more

[a] These must be delighted in, but as means only to help us to God, not as a happiness to content us without God.

sensibly, 'O my friend, my goods, my health,' than 'O my God!' Do we not miss ministry and means more passionately than we miss our God? Do we not bestir ourselves more to obtain and enjoy these than we do to recover our communion with God? Secondly, Do we not delight more in the possession of these than we do in the fruition of God himself? Nay, be not those mercies and duties most pleasant to us, wherein we stand at greatest distance from God? We can read, and study, and confer, preach, and hear, day after day, without much weariness, because in these we have to do with instruments and creatures; but in secret prayer and conversing with God immediately, where no creature interposeth, how dull, how heartless and weary are we! Thirdly, And if we lose creatures or means, doth it not trouble us more than our loss of God? If we lose but a friend, or health, &c., all the town will hear of it; but we can miss our God, and scarce bemoan our misery. Thus it is apparent, we exceedingly make the creature our rest. Is it not enough that they are sweet delights, and refreshing helps in our way to heaven, but they must also be made our heaven itself? Christian reader, I would as willingly make thee sensible of this sin as of any sin in the world, if I could tell how to do it; for the Lord's greatest quarrel with us is in this point. Therefore I most earnestly beseech thee to press upon thine own conscience these following considerations.

Sect. II. 1. It is gross idolatry to make any creature or means our rest. To settle the soul upon it, and say, 'Now I am well,' upon the bare enjoyment of the creature. What is this but to make it our God? Certainly, to be the soul's rest, is God's own prerogative. And as it is palpable idolatry to place our rest in riches and honours; so it is but a more spiritual and refined idolatry to take up our rest in excellent means, in the church's prosperity, and in its reformation. When we would have all that out of God which is to be had only in God, what is this but to turn away from him to the creature, and in our hearts to deny him? When we fetch more of our comfort and delight from the thoughts of prosperity, and those mercies which here we have at a distance from, than from the fore-thoughts of our everlasting blessedness, in him: nay, when the thought of that day when we must come to God is our greatest trouble, and we would do any thing in the world to escape it; but the enjoyment of creatures, though absent from him, is the very thing our souls desire: when we had rather talk of him than come to enjoy him; and

had rather go many miles to hear a powerful sermon of Christ and heaven, than to enter and possess it; Oh! what vile idolatry is this! When we dispute against epicures, academics, and all pagans, how earnestly do we contend that God is the chief good, and the fruition of him our chief happiness! What clear arguments do we bring to evince it! But do we believe ourselves; or are we Christians in judgment, and pagans in affection? Or do we give our senses leave to be the choosers of our happiness, while reason and faith stand by? O Christians! how ill must our dear Lord needs take it, when we give him cause to complain, as sometimes he did of our fellow-idolaters, (Jer. l. 6,) that we have been lost sheep, and have forgotten our resting-place! When we give him cause to say, 'Why, my people can find rest in any thing rather than in me! They can find delight in one another, but none in me; they can rejoice in my creatures and ordinances, but not in me; yea, in their very labours and duty they seek for rest, and not in me; they had rather be any where than be with me. Are these their gods? Have these delivered and redeemed them? Will these be better to them than I have been, or than I would be? If yourselves have but a wife, a husband, a son, that had rather be any where than in your company, and is never so merry as when farthest from you, would you not take it ill yourselves?' Why so must our God needs do: for what do we but lay these things in one end of the balance and God in the other, and foolishly, in our choice, prefer them before him? As Elkanah said to Hannah, "Am not I better to thee than ten sons?" (1 Sam. i. 8.) So when we are longing after creatures, we may hear God say, 'Am not I better than all the creatures to thee?'

2. Consider, How thou contradictest the end of God in giving these things.[b] He gave them to help thee to him, and dost thou take up with them in his stead? He gave them that they might be comfortable refreshments in thy journey, and wouldst thou now dwell in thy inn, and go no further? Thou dost not only contradict God herein, but losest that benefit which thou mightest receive by them, yea, and makest them thy great hurt and hinderance. Surely, it may be said of all our comforts and all ordinances, and the blessedest enjoyments in the church on earth, as God said to the Israelites of his ark, "The ark of the covenant went before them, to search out for them a resting-place." (Numb. x. 33.) So do all God's mercies here. They

[b] I mean the end of precept, not of his purpose.

are not that rest, (as John professeth he was not the Christ,) but they are voices crying in this wilderness, to bid us prepare, for the kingdom of God, our true rest, is at hand. Therefore, to rest here, were to turn all mercies clean contrary to their own ends, and our own advantages, and to destroy ourselves with that which should help us.

Sect. IV. 3. Consider, Whether it be not the most probable way, to cause God, either First, To deny those mercies which we desire; or, Secondly, To take from us these which we enjoy; or, Thirdly, To embitter them at least, or curse them to us? Certainly, God is no where so jealous as here. If you had a servant whom your own wife loved better than she did yourself, would you not both take it ill of such a wife, and rid your house of such a servant? You will not suffer your child to use a knife till he have wit to do it without hurting him. Why so, if the Lord see you begin to settle in the world, and say, 'Here I will rest,' no wonder if he soon in his jealousy unsettle you. If he love you, no wonder if he take that from you wherewith he sees you are about to destroy yourselves. It hath been my long observation of many, that when they have attempted great works, and have just finished them, or have aimed at great things in the world, and have just obtained them; or have lived in much trouble and unsettlement, and have just overcome them, and begin with some content to look upon their condition, and rest in it, they are usually near to death or ruin.[e] You know the story of the fool in the Gospel. When a man is once at this language, Soul, take thy ease or rest; the next news usually is, Thou fool, this night, or this month, or this year, shall they require thy soul, and then whose shall these things be? Oh, what house is there where this fool dwelleth not! Dear Christian friends, you to whom I have especially relation, let you and I consider whether this be not our own case. Have not I, after such an unsettled life, and after four years' living in the weary condition and the unpleasing state of war, and after so many years' groaning under the church's unreformedness, and the great fears that lay upon us, and after so many longings, and prayers for these days: have I not

[e] Mundus iste periculosior est blandus quam molestus: et magis cavendus cum se illicit diligi, quam cum admonet cogitque contemni; sæpe etiam iis qui spiritualia, invisibilia, æterna terrenis præponunt, infert se terrenæ suavitatis affectus, et delectationibus suis nostra comitatur officia. Quanto enim charitati sunt futura meliora, tanto sunt infirmitati violentiora præsentia: et utinam ii qui ea videre et gemere noverunt, vincere et evadere mereantur.—*August.* Epist. 144.

thought of them with too much content? And been ready to say, 'Soul, take thy rest?' Have not I comforted myself more in the forethoughts of enjoying these, than of coming to heaven and enjoying God? What wonder, then, if God cut me off, when I am just sitting down in this supposed rest? And hath not the like been your condition? Many of you have been soldiers, driven from house to home, endured a life of trouble and blood, been deprived of ministry and means, longing to see the church's settling. Did you not reckon up all the comforts you should have at your return; and glad your hearts with such thoughts more than with the thoughts of your coming to heaven? Why, what wonder if God now somewhat cross you, and turn some of your joy into sadness? Many a servant of God hath been destroyed from the earth by being overvalued and overloved. I pray God you may take warning for the time to come, that you rob not yourselves of all your mercies. I am persuaded our discontents, and murmurings with our unpleasing condition, and our covetous desires after more, are not so provoking to God, nor so destructive to the sinner, as our too sweet enjoying, and rest of spirit in a pleasing state. If God have crossed any of you in wife, children, goods, friends, &c., either by taking them from you, or the comfort of them, or the benefit and blessing, try whether this above all other be not the cause. For wheresoever your desires stop, and you say, 'Now I am well,' that condition you make your God, and engage the jealousy of God against it. Whether you be friends to God or enemies, you can never expect that God should wink at such idolatry, or suffer you quietly to enjoy your idols.

Sect. V. 4. Consider, If God should suffer thee thus to take up thy rest here, it were one of the surest plagues and greatest curses that could possibly befall thee. It were better for thee, if thou never hadst a day of ease or content in the world, for then weariness might make thee seek after the true rest. (Psalm xvii. 14; Luke xvi. 25.) But if he should suffer thee to sit down and rest here, where were thy rest when this deceives thee? A restless wretch thou wouldst be through all eternity. To have their portion in this life, and their good things on the earth, is the lot of the most miserable, perishing sinners. And doth it become Christians, then, to expect so much here? Our rest is our heaven, and where we take our rest, there we make our heaven. And wouldst thou have but such a heaven as this? Certainly, as Saul's messengers found but Michal's man of straw

when they expected David, so wilt thou find but a rest of straw, of wind, of vanity, when thou most needest rest. It will be but a handful of waters to a man that is drowning, which will help to destroy, but not to save him. But that is the next.

Sect. VI. 5. Consider, Thou seekest rest where it is not to be found, and so wilt lose all thy labour, and, if thou proceed, thy soul's eternal rest, too. I think I shall easily evince this by these clear demonstrations following:

First, Our rest is only in the full obtaining of our ultimate end, but that is not to be expected in this life, therefore, neither is rest to be here expected. Is God to be enjoyed in the best reformed church, in the purest and most powerful ordinances here, as he is in heaven? I know you will all confess he is not. How little of God, not only the multitude of the blind world, but sometimes the saints themselves do enjoy, even under the most excellent means, let their own frequent complainings testify. And how poor comforters are the best ordinances and enjoyments, without God, the truly spiritual Christian knows! Will a stone rest in the air in the midst of its fall, before it comes to the earth? No, because its centre is its end. Should a traveller take up his rest in the way? No, because his home is his journey's end. When you have all that creatures and means can afford, have you that you sought for? Have you that you believe, pray, suffer for? I think you dare not say so. Why, then, do we once dream of resting here? We are like little children strayed from home, and God is now fetching us home; and we are ready to turn into any house, stay and play with every thing in our way, and sit down on every green bank, and much ado there is to get us home.

Secondly, As we have not yet obtained our end, so are we in the midst of labours and dangers, and is there any resting here? What painful work doth lie upon our hands! Look to our brethren, to godly, to ungodly, to the church, to our souls, to God, and what a deal of work in respect of each of these doth lie before us! And can we rest in the midst of all our labours?[d]

[d] Quum transierit tempus pugnæ, et venerit pax illa quæ præcellit omnem intellectum, (quantum cumque enim cogitaverit de pace illa, minus eam capit animus in ista corporis gravedine constitutus) cum venerit loquam illa pax et patria, jam domus erit Deo, qui in pugna tabernaculum. Non procedimus ad pugnandum, sed permanebimus ad laudandum. Quid enim dicitur de illa domo? Beati qui habitant in domo tua, Domine, in secula seculorum laudabunt te. In tabernaculo adhuc gemimus; in domo laudabimus. Quare? Quia gemitus est peregrinantium, laudatio jam in patria et in domo commo-

Indeed, we may take some refreshing, and ease ourselves sometimes in our troubles, if you will call that rest, but that is not the settling rest we now are speaking of; we may rest on earth, as the ark is said to have rested in the midst of Jordan. (Josh. iii. 13.) A short and small rest, no question; or as the angels of heaven are desired to turn in, and rest them on earth. (Gen. xviii. 4.) They would have been loth to have taken up their dwelling there. Should Israel have settled his rest in the wilderness among serpents, and enemies, and weariness, and famine? Should Noah have made the ark his home, and have been loth to come forth when the waters were fallen? Should the mariner choose his dwelling on the sea, and settle his rest in the midst of rocks, and sands, and raging tempests? Though he may adventure through all these for a commodity of worth, yet I think he takes it not for his rest. Should a soldier rest in the midst of fight, when he is in the very thickest of his enemies, and the instruments of death compass him about? I think he cares not how soon the battle is over. And though he may adventure upon war for the obtaining of peace, yet I hope he is not so mad as to take that instead of peace. And are not Christians such travellers, such mariners, such soldiers? Have you not fears within, and troubles without? Are we not in the thickest of continual dangers? We cannot eat, drink, sleep, labour, pray, hear, confer, &c., but in the midst of snares and perils, and shall we sit down and rest here? Oh, Christian, follow thy work, look to thy danger, hold on to the end; win the field and come off the ground, before thou think of a settling rest. I read indeed that Peter on the mount, when he had seen a glimpse of glory, said, "It is good for us to be here." But surely, when he was on the sea, in the midst of the waves, he doth not then say, "It is good to be here." No, then he hath other language, "Save, Master, we perish. "And even his desires to rest on the mount, are noted in Scripture to come from hence, He knew not what he said: it was on earth, though with Christ in his transfiguration. And I dare say the like of thee, whenever thou

rantium. Qui in illam intrant ut inhabitent, ipsi sunt qui intrant ut inhabitentur. In domum tuam intra ut inhabites. In domum Dei ut inhabiteris. Est enim melior Domus: qui cum te cœperit inhabitare, beatum te facit. Nam si tu ab illo non habitaris, miser es.—*August. in Psalm* xxvi. et xxxi. Verum ecce; vivat ut vult, quoniam extorsit, sibique imperavit, non velle quod non potest, atque hoc velle quod potest (ut ait Terentius, quoniam non potest id fieri quod vis, id velis quod possit). Non tamen ideo beatus est, qui patienter miser est.—*August. de Civit.* lib. xiv. c. 25.

tallest of resting on earth, Thou knowest not what thou sayest. I read that Christ, when he was on the cross, comforted the converted thief with this, "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise." But if he had only comforted him with telling him that he should rest there on that cross, would he not have taken it for a derision? Methinks it should be ill resting in the midst of sicknesses and pains, persecution and distresses. One would think it should be no contentful dwelling for lambs among wolves. The wicked have some slender pretence for their sin in this kind; they are among their friends, in the midst of their portion, enjoying all the happiness that they are likely to enjoy. But is it so with the godly? Surely, the world is at best but a stepmother to them; nay, an open enemy. But if nothing else would convince us, yet surely the remainders of sin which doth so easily beset us, would quickly satisfy a believer that here is not his rest. What, a Christian! and rest in a state of sinning! It cannot be; or do they hope for a perfect freedom here? That is impossible. I say, therefore, to every one that thinketh of rest on earth, as Micah, "Arise ye, depart; this is not your rest, because it is polluted." (Chap. ii. v. 10.)

Thirdly, The nature of all these things may convince you, that they cannot be a Christian's true rest. They are too poor to make us rich, and too low to raise us to happiness; and too empty to fill our souls; and too base to make us blessed: and of too short continuance to be our eternal contents. They cannot subsist themselves without support from heaven; how, then, can they give subsistence to our souls? Surely, if prosperity, or whatsoever we here can desire, be too base to make us gods of, then are they too base to be our rests.

Fourthly, That which is the soul's true rest, must be sufficient to afford it perpetual satisfaction; but all things below do delight us only with fresh variety.* The content which any creature affordeth, doth wax old and abate after a short enjoyment. We pine away for them, as Amnon for his sister; and when we have satisfied our desire, we are weary of them and loathe them. If God should rain down angels' food, after awhile

* Summum bonum immortale est; nescit exire. Nec satietatem habet, nec pœnitentiam. At voluptas tunc cum maxime delectat, extinguitur. Nec multum loci habet; itaque cito implet: et tædio est, et post primum impetum marcet. Nec id unquam certum est, cujus in motu natura est. Nec ulla potest ejus esse substantia, quod venit transitve celerrime, in ipso usu sui periturum. Eo enim pervenit, ubi desinat: et dum incipit, spectat ad finem. —*Seneca de Vita Beat.* c. 7.

our souls would loathe that dry manna. The most dainty fare, the most costly clothing would not please us, were we tied to them alone. The most sumptuous house, the softest bed, were we confined to them, would be but a prison. One recreation pleaseth not long, we must have supply of new, or our delights will languish. Nay, our delight in our society and friendship, especially if carnal, is strongest while fresh: and in the ordinances of God themselves, so far as we delight in them for themselves, and not for God, if novelty support not our delight, grows dull. If we hear still the same minister, or if in preaching and praying, he use oft the same expressions, or if he preach oft the same sermon, how dull grows our devotion, though the matter be never so good, and at first did never so highly please us! If we read the most excellent and pleasing books, the third or fourth reading is usually more heartless than the first or second; nay, in our general way of Christianity, our first godly acquaintance, our first preachers, our first books, our first duties, have too commonly our strongest affections. All creatures are to us, as the flowers to the bee; there is but little of that matter which affords them honey on any flower, and therefore they must have supply of fresh variety, and take of each a superficial taste, and so to the next; yea, some having gone through variety of states, and tasted of the pleasures of their own country, do travel for fresh variety abroad, and when they come home, they usually betake themselves to some solitary corner, and sit down, and cry with Solomon, 'Vanity and vexation!' And with David, 'I have seen an end of all perfection:' and can this be a place of rest for the soul?

Fifthly, Those that know the creature least, do affect it most; the more it is known, the less it satisfieth: those only are taken with it, who can see no farther than its outward beauty, not beholding its outward vanity; it is like a comely picture, if you stand too near it, it appears less beautiful; we are prone to over-admire the persons of men, places of honour, and other men's happy condition; but it is only while we do but half know them: stay but a while till we know them thoroughly, and have discovered the evil as well as the good, and the defects as well as the perfections, and we then do cease our admiration.

Sect. VII. 6. To have creatures and means without God, who is their end, is so far from being our happiness, that it is an aggravation of our misery, even as to have food without strength, and starve in the midst of plenty, and as Pharaoh's kine, to

devour all, and lean still. What the better were you if you had the best minister on earth, the best society, the purest church; and therewithal the most plentiful estate, but nothing of God? If God should say, Take my creatures, my word, my servants, my ordinances, but not myself, would you take this for a happiness? If you had the word of God, and not the Word which is God?[f] Or the bread of the Lord, and not the Lord, which is the true bread? Or could cry with the Jews, "The temple of the Lord," and had not the Lord of the temple? this were a poor happiness.

Was Capernaum the more happy, or the more miserable, for seeing the mighty works which they had seen, and hearing the words of Christ which they did hear? Surely, that which aggravates our sin and misery cannot be our rest.

7. If all this be nothing, do but consult with experience, both other men's and your own, too many thousands and millions have made trial, but did ever one of these find a sufficient rest for his soul on this earth?[g] Delights I deny not but they have found, and imperfect temporary content, but rest and satisfaction they never found: and shall we think to find that which never man could find before us? Ahab's kingdom is nothing to him, except he had also Naboth's vineyard, and did that satisfy him, think you, when he obtained it? If we had conquered to ourselves the whole world, we should perhaps do as Alexander is fabled to have done, sit down and weep because there is never another world to conquer. If I should send you forth as Noah's dove, to go through the earth, to look for a resting-place, you would return with a confession, that you can find none: go ask honour, Is there rest here? Why you may as well rest on the top of the tempestuous mountains, or in Ætna's flames, or on the pinnacle of the temple. If you ask riches, Is there rest

[f] Panem Domini, non panem Dominum, ut Aug. Matt. i. 21—23.

[g] Hinc evidentior miseria est quia homo non vivit ut vult. Nam sicut vellet, vivere, beatum se putaret, sed nec sic tamen esset si turpiter viveret. Quanquam si diligentius attendemus, nisi beatus, non vivit ut vult; et nullus beatus nisi justus. Sed etiam ipse justus non vivit ut vult, nisi eo pervenerit ubi mori, falli, offendi omnino non possit, eique sit certum ita semper futurum. Hoc enim natura expetit; nec plene et perfecte beata erit, nisi adepta quod expetit. Nunc vero quis hominum potest ut vult vivere, quando ipsum vivere non est in potestate? Vivere enim vult, mori cogitur. Quomodo ergo vivit ut vult, qui non vivit quamdiu vult? Quod si mori voluerit, quomodo potest ut vult vivere, qui non vult vivere? Et si ideo mori velit, non quod nolit vivere, sed ut post mortem melius possit vivere, nondum ergo ut vult vivit; sed cum ad id quod vult moriendo pervenerit.—*Aug. de Civ.* lib. xiv. c. 24, 25.

here? Even such as is in a bed of thorns; or were it a bed of down, yet you must arise in the morning, and leave it to the next guest that shall succeed you; or if you inquire of worldly pleasure and ease, can they give you any tidings of true rest? Even such as the fish or bird hath in the net, or in swallowing down the deceitful bait; when the pleasure is at the sweetest, death is the nearest: it is just such a content and happiness, as the exhilarating vapours of the wine do give to a man that is drunk: it causeth a merry and cheerful heart, it makes him forget his wants and miseries, and conceive himself the happiest man in the world, till his sick vomitings have freed him of his disease, or sleep hath assuaged and subdued those vapours which deluded his phantasy, and perverted his understanding, and then he awakes a more unhappy man than ever he was before. Such is the rest and happiness that all worldly pleasures do afford. As the phantasy may be delighted in a pleasant dream, when all the senses are captivated by sleep; so may the flesh of sensitive appetite, when the reasonable soul is captivated by security: but when the morning comes, the delusion vanisheth, and where is the pleasure and happiness then? Or if you should go to learning, to purest, plentifulest, powerfulest ordinances, or compass sea and land to find out the perfectest church, and holiest saints, and inquire whether there your soul may rest: you might happily receive from these indeed an olive-branch of hope, as they are means to your rest, and have relation to eternity; but in regard of any satisfaction in themselves, you would remain as restless as ever before. Oh how well might these answer many of us, with that indignation, as Jacob did Rachel, "Am I instead of God?" Or as the king of Israel said to the messengers of the king of Assyria, when he required him to restore Naaman to health, "Am I God, to kill and make alive, that this man sends to me to recover a man of his leprosy?" So may the highest perfection on earth say, 'Are we God, or instead of God, that this man comes to us to give a soul rest?' Go take a view of all estates of men in the world, and see whether any of them have found this rest. Go to the husbandman, and demand of him, behold his circular endless labours, his continual care and toil and weariness, and you will easily see, that there is no rest: go to the tradesman, and you shall find the like: if I should send you lower, you would judge your labour lost; or go to the conscionable painful minister, and there you will yet more easily be satisfied; for though his spending,

killing, endless labours are exceeding sweet, yet it is not because they are his rest, but in reference to his people's, and his own eternal rest, at which he aims, and to which they may conduce: if you should ascend to magistracy, and inquire at the throne, you would find there is no condition so restless, and your hearts would even pity poor princes and kings. Doubtless neither court nor country, towns or cities, shops or fields, treasuries, libraries, solitariness, society, studies, or pulpits, can afford any such thing as this rest. If you could inquire of the dead of all generations, or if you could ask the living through all dominions, they would all tell you, 'Here is no rest;' and all mankind may say, "All our days are sorrow, and our labour is grief, and our hearts take not rest." (Eccles. ii. 23.) Go to Geneva, go to New England, find out the church which you think most happy, and we may say of it, as lamenting Jeremy of the church of the Jews, "She dwelleth among the heathen, she findeth no rest, all her persecutors overtake her." (Lam. i. 3.) The holiest prophet, the blessedest apostle would say, as one of the most blessed did, "Our flesh had no rest, without were fightings, within were fears." (2 Cor. vii. 5.) If neither Christ nor his apostles, to whom was given the earth and the fulness thereof, had no rest here, why should we expect it? [h]

Or if other men's experiences move you not, do but take a view of your own: can you remember the estate that did fully satisfy you? Or if you could, will it prove a lasting state? For my own part, I have run through several places and states of life, and though I never had the necessities which might occasion discontent, yet did I never find a settlement for my soul; and I believe we may all say of our rest, as Paul of our hopes, "If it were in this life only, we were of all men most miserable." (1 Cor. xv. 19.) Or if you will not credit your past experience, you may try in your present or future wants: when conscience is wounded, God offended, your bodies weakened, your friends afflicted, see if these can yield you rest. If then either Scripture, or reason, or the experience of ourselves, and all the world, will satisfy us, we may see there is no resting here. And yet how guilty are the generality of professors of this sin! How

[h] Aliæ ætates hominum exilia videre: nostra totos populos patria extorres, bella ubique, et in ipsis bellis alia bella per militum sævitiam ac rapacitatem. In tot malis aut circumstantibus, aut impendentibus, tutum nihil nisi mors. Qui tanto rerum turbini eripitur, quid aliud quam evasisse censendus est?—*Grotius ad Gallos*, Epist. 178. p. 432.

many halts and stops do we make, before we will make the Lord our rest! How must God even drive us, and fire us out of every condition, lest we should sit down and rest there! If he give us prosperity, riches, or honour, we do in our hearts dance before them, as the Israelites before their calf, and say, 'These are thy gods,' and conclude it is good being here. If he imbitter all these to us by crosses, how do we strive to have the cross removed, and the bitterness taken away, and are restless till our condition be sweetened to us, that we may sit down again and rest where we were! If the Lord, seeing our perverseness, shall now proceed in the cure, and take the creature quite away, then how do we labour, and care, and cry, and pray, that God would restore it, that if it may be, we may make it our rest again! And while we are deprived of its actual enjoyment, and have not our former idol to delight in, yet rather than come to God, we delight ourselves in our hopes of recovering our former state; and as long as there is the least likelihood of obtaining it, we make those very hopes our rest: if the poor by labouring all their days, have but hopes of a fuller estate when they are old (though a hundred to one they die before they have obtained it, or certainly at least immediately after), yet do they labour with patience, and rest themselves on these expectations. Or if God doth take away both present enjoyments, and all hopes of ever recovering them, how do we search about, from creature to creature, to find out something to supply the room, and to settle upon, instead thereof? Yea, if we can find no supply, but are sure we shall live in poverty, in sickness, in disgrace, while we are on earth, yet will we rather settle in this misery, and make a rest of a wretched being, than we will leave all and come to God. A man would think, that a multitude of poor people, who beg their bread, or can scarce with their hardest labour have sustenance for their lives, should easily be driven from resting here, and willingly look to heaven for rest; and the sick who have not a day of ease, nor any hope of recovery left them. But oh the cursed averseness of these souls from God! We will rather account our misery our happiness; yea, that which we daily groan under as intolerable, than we will take up our happiness in God. If any place in hell were tolerable, the soul would rather take up its rest there, than come to God. Yea, when he is bringing us over to him, and hath convinced us of the worth of his ways and service, the last deceit of all is here, we will rather settle upon those ways that lead to

him, and those ordinances which speak of him, and those gifts which flow from him, than we will come clean over to himself. Christian, marvel not that I speak so much of resting in these; beware lest it should prove thy own case: I suppose thou art so far convinced of the vanity of riches, and honour, and carnal pleasure, that thou canst more easily disclaim these, and it is well if it be so; but for thy more spiritual mercies in thy way of profession, thou lookest on these with less suspicion, and thinkest they are so near to God, that thou canst not delight in them too much, especially seeing most of the world despise them, or delight in them too little. But doth not the increase of these mercies dull thy longings after heaven? If all were according to thy desire in the church, wouldest thou not sit down and say, I am well, Soul, take thy rest; and think it a judgment to be removed to heaven? Surely if thy delight in these excel not thy delight in God, or if thou wouldest gladly leave the most happy condition on earth, to be with God, then art thou a rare man, a Christian indeed. I know the means of grace must be loved and valued, and the usual enjoyment of God is in the use of them; and he that delighteth in any worldly thing more than in them, is not a true Christian: but when we are content with duty instead of God, and had rather be at a sermon than in heaven; and a member of a church here, than of that perfect church, and rejoice in ordinances, but as they are part of our earthly prosperity; this is a sad mistake. Many were more willing to go to heaven in the former days of persecution, when they had no hopes of seeing the church reformed, or delivered: but now men are in hopes to have all things almost as they desire, the case is altered; and they begin to look at heaven as strangely and sadly, as if it would be a loss to be removed to it. Is this the right use of reformation? Or is this the way to have it continued or perfected? Should our deliverances draw our hearts from God? Oh, how much better were it, in every trouble, to fetch our chief arguments of comfort, from the place where our chiefest rest remains! And when others comfort the poor with hopes of wealth, or the sick with hopes of health and life, let us comfort ourselves with the hopes of heaven. So far rejoice in the creature, as it comes from God, or leads to him, or brings thee some report of his love: so far let thy soul take comfort in ordinances, as God doth accompany them with quickening, or comfort, or gives himself unto thy soul by them: still remembering, when thou hast even what thou dost desire,

yet this is not heaven; yet these are but the first-fruits. Is it not enough that God alloweth us all the comfort of travellers, and accordingly to rejoice in all his mercies, but we must set up our staff as if we were at home? "While we are present in the body, we are absent from the Lord;" (2 Cor. v. 6—9;) and while we are absent from him, we are absent from our rest. If God were as willing to be absent from us as we from him, and if he were as loth to be our rest as we are loth to rest in him, we should be left to an eternal restless separation. In a word, as you are sensible of the sinfulness of your earthly discontents, so be you also of your irregular contents, and pray God to pardon them much more. And above all the plagues and judgments of God on this side hell, see that you watch and pray against this (of settling any where short of heaven, or reposing your souls to rest on any thing below God). Or else, when the bough which you tread on breaks, and the things which you rest upon deceive you, you will perceive your labour all lost, and your sweetest contents to be preparatives to your woe, and your highest hopes will make you ashamed. Try, if you can persuade Satan to leave tempting, and the world to cease both troubling and seducing, and sin to cease inhabiting and acting; if you can bring the glory of God from above, or remove the court from heaven to earth, and secure the continuance of this through eternity, then settle yourselves below, and say, Soul, take thy rest here; but till then, admit not such a thought.

CHAP. II.

USE VII.—*Reproving our Unwillingness to Die.*

SECT. I. Is there a rest remaining for the people of God? Why are we then so loth to die, and to depart from hence that we may possess this rest? If I may judge of other men's hearts by my own, we are exceeding guilty in this point. We linger, as Lot in Sodom, till God being merciful to us, doth pluck us away against our wills.[1] How rare is it to meet with a

[1] We resist and struggle, and, like froward servants, we are hailed to our Master's presence with sadness and unwillingness; going out hence as compelled by necessity, and not in willing obedience; and, would we be honoured

Christian, though of strongest parts, and longest profession, that can die with an unfeigned willingness! Especially if worldly calamity constrain them not to be willing! Indeed, we sometime set a good face on it, and pretend a willingness when we see there is no remedy, and that our unwillingness is only a disgrace to us, but will not help to prolong our lives: but if God had enacted such a law for the continuance of our lives on earth, as is enacted for the continuance of that parliament, that we should not be dissolved till our own pleasure; and that no man should die till he were truly willing; I fear heaven might be empty for the most of us; and if our worldly prosperity did not fade, our lives on earth would be very long, if not eternal. We pretend desires of being better prepared, and of doing God some greater service, and to that end we beg one year more, and another, and another;[k] but still our promised preparation and service are as far to seek as ever before, and we remain as unwilling to die, as we were when we begged our first reprival. If God were not more willing of our company, than we are of his, how long should we remain thus distant from him? And as we had never been sanctified if God had staid till we were willing; so if he should refer it wholly to ourselves, it would at least be long before we should be glorified. I confess that death of itself is not desirable; but the soul's rest is with God, to which death is the common passage. And because we are apt to make light of this sin, and to plead our common nature to patronize it, let me here set before you its aggravations; and also propound some further considerations, which may be useful to you and myself against it.

Sect. II. And, first, consider what a deal of gross infidelity doth lurk in the bowels of this sin. Either paganish unbelief of the truth of that eternal blessedness, and of the truth of the Scripture which doth promise it to us; or, at least, a doubting

by him with the heavenly rewards, to whom we go against our wills? Why pray we that the kingdom of heaven may come, if this earthly captivity do delight us?—*Cyprian. de Mortalitat.* p. 355.

[k] We are all naturally desirous to live, and though we prize life above all earthly things, yet we are ashamed to profess that we desire it for its own sake, but pretend some other reason; one for this, and another for that, &c. After all this hypocrisy, nature above all things would live, and makes life the main end of living: but grace hath higher thoughts, &c.—*Bishop Hall, Solil.* p. 21, 79, 80. For mere moral considerations against the fear of death, read Sen. Epist. 20. ad Lucilium, and Charon of Wisdom, lib. ii. c. 11. For spiritual considerations (among many larger) Cypr. de Mortalitate (and others of his) is excellent.

of our own interest; or most usually somewhat of both these. And though Christians are usually most sensible of the latter, and therefore complain most against it, yet I am apt to suspect the former to be the main radical master-sin, and of greatest force in this business. Oh! if we did but verily believe that the promise of this glory is the word of God, and that God doth truly mean as he speaks, and is fully resolved to make it good; if we did verily believe that there is, indeed, such blessedness prepared for believers as the Scripture mentioneth, surely we should be as impatient of living as we are now fearful of dying,[1] and should think every day a year till our last day should come. We should as hardly refrain from laying violent hands on ourselves, or from the neglecting of the means of our health and life, as we do now from overmuch carefulness and seeking of life by unlawful means. If the eloquent oration of a philosopher, concerning the soul's immortality and the life to come, could make his affected hearer presently to cast himself headlong from the rock, as impatient of any longer delay, what would a serious christian belief do, if God's law against self-murder did not restrain? Is it possible that we can truly believe that death will remove us from misery to such glory, and yet be loth to die? If it were the doubts of our interest which made us afraid, yet a true belief of the certainty and excellency of this rest would make us restless till our interest be cleared. If a man that is desperately sick to-day, did believe he should arise sound the next morning; or a man to-day, in despicable poverty, had assurance that he should to-morrow arise a prince; would they be afraid to go to bed, or rather think it the longest day of their lives, till that desired night and morning came? The truth is, though there is much faith and Christianity in our mouths, yet there is much infidelity and paganism in our hearts, which is the main cause that we are so loth to die.

Sect. III. 3. And as the weakness of our faith,[m] so also the cold-

[1] Let him fear to die, who being not born again of water and the Spirit, is condemned to the flames of hell. Let him fear to die, who is not judged to be Christ's in his cross and passion. Let him fear to die, who must from this death pass to the second death. Let him fear to die, whom eternal life must torment with everlasting pains, when he departeth hence. Let him fear to die, who by his longer delay doth gain only the deferring of his groans and torments.—*Cyprian. de Mortalitate*, sec. x. p. (mihi) 344.

[m] Beata vita si non amatur, non habetur: porro si amatur et habetur, cæteris omnibus rebus excellentius necesse est ametur; quoniam propter hanc amandum est, quicquid aliud amatur: porro si tantum amatur quantum amari digna est, (non enim beatus est à quo ipsa beata vita non amatur ut

ness of our love, is exceedingly discovered by our unwillingness to die. Love doth desire the nearest conjunction, the fullest fruition, and closest communion. Where these desires are absent, there is only a naked pretence of love. He that ever felt such a thing as love working in his breast, hath also felt these desires attending it. If we love our friend, we love his company: his presence is comfortable, his absence is troublesome. When he goes from us, we desire his return: when he comes to us, we entertain him with welcome and gladness: when he dies, we mourn, and usually overmourn. To be separated from a faithful friend, is to us as the renting of a member from our bodies; and would not our desires after God be such, if we really loved him? Nay, should it not be much more than such, as he is above all friends most lovely? The Lord teach us to look closely to our hearts, and take heed of self-deceit in this point: for, certainly, whatever we pretend or conceit, if we love either father, mother, husband, wife, child, friend, wealth, or life, more than Christ, we are yet none of his sincere disciples. When it comes to the trial, the question will not be who hath preached most, or heard most, or talked most, but who hath loved most. When our account is given, Christ will not take sermons, prayers, fastings; no, not the giving of our goods, nor the burning of our bodies instead of love. (1 Cor. xiii. 1—4, 8, 13, and xvi. 22; Eph. vi. 24.) And do we love him, and yet care not how long we are from him? If I be deprived of my bosom friend, methinks I am as a man in a wilderness, solitary and disconsolate: and is my absence from God no part of my trouble; and yet can I take him for my chiefest friend? If I delight but in some garden, or walk, or gallery, I would be much in it: if I love my books, I am much with them, and almost unweariedly poring on them. The food which I love, I would often feed on: the clothes that I love, I would often wear: the recreations which I love, I would often use them: the business which I love, I would be much employed in. And can I love God, and that above all these, and yet have

digna est) fieri non potest ut eam qui sic amat, non æternam velit. Tunc igitur beata erit, quando erit æterna.—*Aug. de Civit.* lib. xiv. c. 25. Solus est qui sine amico est.—*Aug.* Herodotus tells us of a country where men have many wives, and when a man dieth all his wives must be examined, that it may be known which he loved best, and that must be slain and buried with him; and that they used to strive for this as a high privilege, and take it to heart as a great dishonour to be put by it.—*Herodot.* lib. v. p. (edit. Sylburg.) 284. And will not the love of Christ make a Christian as willing to die?

no desires to be with him? Is it not a far likelier sign of hatred than of love, when the thoughts of our appearing before God are our most grievous thoughts; and when we take ourselves as undone, because we must die and come unto him? Surely, I should scarce take him for an unfeigned friend, who were as well contented to be absent from me, as we ordinarily are to be absent from God. Was it such a joy to Jacob to see the face of Joseph in Egypt, and shall we so dread the sight of Christ in glory, and yet say we love him? I dare not conclude that we have no love at all when we are so loth to die; but I dare say, were our love more, we should die more willingly. Yea, I dare say, did we love God but as strongly as a worldling loves his wealth, or as an ambitious man his honour, or a voluptuous man his pleasure, yea, as a drunkard loves his swinish delight, or an unclean person his brutish lust; we should not then be so exceeding loth to leave the world, and go to God. Oh! if this holy flame of love were thoroughly kindled in our breasts, instead of our pressing fears, our dolorous complaints, and earnest prayers against death, we should join in David's wilderness lamentations. "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God: my soul thirsteth for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God?" (Psalm xlii. 1, 2.) The truth is, as our knowledge of God is exceeding dark, and our faith in him exceeding feeble; so is our love to him but little, and therefore are our desires after him so dull.

Sect. IV. 3. It appears we are little weary of sinning, when we are so unwilling to be freed by dying. Did we take sin for the greatest evil, we should not be willing of its company so long; did we look on sin as our cruellest enemy, and on a sinful life as the most miserable life, sure we should then be more willing of a change. But, oh! how far are our hearts from our doctrinal profession, in this point also! We preach, and write, and talk against sin, and call it all that naught is: and when we are called to leave it, we are loth to depart: we brand it with the most odious names that we can imagine, and all fall short of expressing its vileness; but when the approach of death puts us to the trial, we choose a continuance with these abominations, before the presence and fruition of God. But as Nemon smote his soldier for railing against Alexander's enemy, saying, "I hired thee to fight against him, and not to rail against him;"[n] so may God smite us also when he shall hear our tongues reviling that sin

[n] Plutarch. in Apotheg.

which we resist so slothfully, and part with so unwillingly. Christians, seeing we are conscious that our hearts deserve a smiting for this, let us join together to chide and smite our own hearts, before God do judge and smite them. O foolish, sinful, heart! hast thou been so long a sink of sin, a cage of all unclean lusts, a fountain incessantly streaming forth the bitter and deadly waters of transgression: and art thou not yet more weary? Wretched soul! hast thou been so long wounded in all thy faculties; so grievously languishing in all thy performances; so fruitful a soul for all iniquities; and art thou not yet weary? Hast thou not yet transgressed long enough;* nor long enough provoked thy Lord; nor long enough abused love? Wouldst thou yet grieve the Spirit more, and sin against thy Saviour's blood, and more increase thine own wounds, and still lie under thy grievous imperfections? Hath thy sin proved so profitable a commodity, so necessary a companion, such a delightful employment, that thou dost so much dread the parting day? Hath thy Lord deserved this at thy hands, that thou shouldst choose to continue in the suburbs of hell, rather than live with him in light; and rather stay and drudge in sin, and abide with his and thy own professed enemy, than come away and dwell with God? May not God justly grant thee thy wishes, and seal thee a lease of thy desired distance, and nail thy ear to these doors of misery, and exclude thee eternally from his glory? Foolish sinner! who hath wronged thee, God or sin? Who hath wounded thee and caused thy groans? Who hath made thy life so woful, and caused thee to spend thy days in dolour? Is it Christ, or is it thy corruption; and art thou yet so loth to think of parting? Shall God be willing to dwell with man, and the Spirit to abide in thy peevish heart; and that where sin doth straiten his room, and a cursed inmate inhabit with him, which is ever quarrelling and contriving against him: and shall man be loth to come to God, where is nothing but perfect blessedness and glory? Is not this to judge ourselves unworthy of everlasting life? If they in Acts xiii. 46, who put the Gospel from them, did judge themselves unworthy, do not we who flee from life and glory?

* Cum Schegius medicus cæcus fieret, patienter fert, Quid, inquit, multa in vita vidi, quæ maluissem non videre. Optavi ad non nulla etiam fuisse surdum. Why do we over and over in our prayers beg and entreat that God's kingdom might hasten, if we have greater desires and stronger wishes to serve the devil here, than to go and reign with Christ?—*Cyprian. de Mortal.* sec. xiii. p. 345.

Sect. V. 4. It shows that we are insensible of the vanity of the creature, and of the vexation accompanying our residence here, when we are so loth to hear or think of a removal. Whatever we say against the world, or how grievous soever our complaints may seem; we either believe not, or feel not what we say, or else we should be answerably affected to it. We call the world our enemy, and cry out of the oppression of our taskmasters, and groan under our sore bondage; but either we speak not as we think, or else we imagine some singular happiness to consist in the possession of worldly things, for which all this should be endured. Is any man loth to leave his prison, or to remove his dwelling from his cruel enemies, or to escape the hands of murderous robbers?[p] Do we take the world indeed for our prison, our cruel, spoiling, murderous foe; and yet are we loth to leave it? Do we take this flesh for the clog of our spirits; and a veil that is drawn betwixt us and God; and a continual in-dwelling traitor to our souls; and yet are we loth to lay it down? Indeed, Peter was smitten by the angel,[q] before he arose and left his prison; but it was more from his ignorance of his intended deliverance, than any unwillingness to leave the place. I have read of Joseph's long imprisonment, and Daniel's casting into the den of lions, and Jeremiah's sticking fast in the dungeon, and Jonah's lying in the belly of the whale, and David from the deep crying to God; but I remember not that any were loth to be delivered. I have read, indeed, that they suffered cheerfully, and rejoiced in being afflicted, destitute, and tormented; yea, and that some of them would not accept of deliverance:[r] but not from any love to the suffering, or any unwillingness to change their condition, but because of the hard terms of their deliverance, and from the hope they had of a better resurrection. Though Paul and Silas could sing in the stocks,[s]

[p] Inquit Platerus ille felix ægrotus, finem fac dolorum Domine: sordent enim mihi omnia terrena. Utinam, utinam vel hoc momento hora meæ mortis iustaret; ex animo cupio dissolvi, et esse cum Christo. Even because we despise death, you may judge well of us. For I myself, when I delighted in the doctrine of Plato, when I heard the Christians reproached, and saw that they feared not death, nor any thing which was terrible to other men, I bethought myself, that it was impossible that these men should be servants to vice and pleasures. For what man that is given to pleasure, or is intemperate, or sweetly glutteth in human bowls, can delight in death, which depriveth him of his delights; and would not rather endeavour to live here still, and to dissemble with the magistrates (that would kill him)? much less will he give himself up to death.—*Justin Martyr. Apolog.* 1.

[q] Acts xii. 7—9. [r] Hebrews xi. [s] Acts xvi. 25.

and comfortably bear the cruel scourgings, yet I do not believe they were unwilling to go forth, nor took it ill when God released them.[r] Ah, foolish, wretched soul! doth every prisoner groan for freedom, and every slave desire his jubilee, and every sick man long for health, and every hungry man for food; and dost thou alone abhor deliverance? Doth the seaman long to see the land? Doth the husbandman desire the harvest, and the labouring man to receive his pay? Doth the traveller long to be at home, and the runner long to win the prize, and the soldier long to win the field? And art thou loth to see thy labours finished, and to receive the end of thy faith and sufferings, and to obtain the thing for which thou livest? Are all thy sufferings only seeming? Have thy gripes, thy griefs and groans, been only dreams? If they were, yet methinks we should not be afraid of waking. Fearful dreams are not delightful. Or, is it not rather the world's delights that all were dreams and shadows? Is not all its glory as the light of the glow-worm, a wandering fire, yielding but small directing light, and as little comforting heat in all our doubtful and sorrowful darkness? Or, hath the world, in these its latter days, laid aside its ancient enmity? Is it become of late more kind? Hath it left its thorny, renting nature? Who hath wrought this great change, and who hath made this reconciliation? Surely, not the great Reconciler. He hath told us, in the world we shall have trouble, and in him only we shall have peace. We may reconcile ourselves to the world at our peril, but it will never reconcile itself to us. O foolish, unworthy soul, who hadst rather dwell in this land of darkness, and rather wander in this barren wilderness, than be at rest with Jesus Christ; who hadst rather stay among the wolves, and daily suffer the scorpions' stings, than to praise the Lord with the hosts of heaven. If thou didst well know what heaven is, and what earth is, it would not be so.

Sect. VI. This unwillingness to die, doth actually impeach us of high treason against the Lord: is it not a choosing of earth before him; and taking these present things for our happiness, and consequently making them our very God? If we

[r] Compara nunc si placeat hanc vitam cum illa. Elige si potes perpetuam corporis vitam in labore, ærumnaque miserabili tantarum commutationum, votorumque tædio, fastidio voluptatum. Nam si Deus ista perpetuare velit, illa diligeres? Nam si per se vita fugienda est, ut si molestiarum fuga, requies ærumnarum, quanto magis ea requies est expetenda, cui futuræ resurrectionis voluptas perpetua succedet? Ubi nulla criminum series, nulla illecebra delictorum.—*Ambros. Lib. de Resurrect.* John xvi. 20, 22.

did indeed make God our God; that is, our end, our rest, our portion, our treasure, how is it possible but we should desire to enjoy him? It behoves us the rather to be fearful of this, it being utterly inconsistent with saving grace, to value any thing before God, or to make the creature our highest end. Many other sins, foul and great, may possibly yet consist with sincerity; but so, I am certain, cannot that. But concerning this I have spoken before.

Sect. VII. 6. And all these defects being thus discovered, what a deal of dissembling doth it moreover show! [a] We take on us to believe undoubtedly the exceeding, eternal weight of glory; we call God our chiefest good, and say, We love him above all; and for all this, we flee from him as if it were from hell itself. Would you have any man believe you, when you call the Lord your only hope, and speak of Christ as all in all, and talk of the joy that is in his presence, and yet would endure the hardest life rather than die, and come into his presence? What self-contradiction this, to talk so hardly of the world and flesh, to groan and complain of sin and suffering, and yet fear no day more than that which we expect should bring our final freedom! What shameless, gross dissembling is this, to spend so many hours and days in hearing sermons, reading books, conferring with others, and all to learn the way to a place which we are loth to come to; to take on us all our lifetime to walk towards heaven, to run, to strive, to fight for heaven, which we are loth to come to! What apparent, palpable hypocrisy is this, to lie upon our knees in public and private, and spend one hour after another in prayer for that which we would not have! If one should overhear thee in thy daily devotions crying out, 'Lord, deliver me from this body of death, from this sin, this sickness, this poverty, these cares and fears; how long, Lord, shall I suffer these?' And withal should hear thee praying against death, can he believe thy tongue agrees with thy heart? Except thou have so far lost thy reason as to ex-

[a] Transi circa natalia suorum atque obitus hoc factitant; edito puero propinqui eum circumsidentes cum ploratione prosequuntur, ob ea mala quæ necesse est illi quod vitam ingressus sit, perpeti; humanas omnes calamitates, recensentes. Hominem autem fato functum, per lusum atque lætitiam terræ demandant, referentes quot malis liberatus, in omni sit fœlicitate.—*Herodotus*, lib. v. (edit. Sylburg.) p. 284. It seems these believed the soul's immortality and future happiness. How preposterous is it, and how perverse, that when we pray that God's will be done; yet when he calleth us out of this world, we will not readily obey the command of his will!—*Cyprian. de Mortalit.* sect. xii. p. 345.

pect all this here; or except the papist's doctrine were true, that we are able to fulfil the law of God; or our late perfectionists were truly enlightened, who think they can live and not sin: but if thou know these to be undoubtedly false, how canst thou deny thy gross dissembling?

Sect. VIII. 7. Consider, How do we wrong the Lord and his promises, and disgrace his ways in the eyes of the world![t] As if we would actually persuade them to question, whether God be true of his word or not; whether there be any such glory as Scripture mentions; when they see those who have professed to live by faith, and have boasted of their hopes in another world, and persuaded others to let go all for these hopes, and spoken disgracefully of all things below, in comparison of these inexpressible things above; I say, when they see these very men so loth to leave their hold of present things, and to go to that glory which they talked and boasted of, how doth it make the weak to stagger, and confirm the world in their unbelief and sensuality; and make them conclude, Sure if these professors did expect so much glory, and make so light of the world as they seem, they would not themselves be so loth of a change. Oh, how are we ever able to repair the wrong which we do to God and poor souls by this scandal! and, what an honour to God; what a strengthening to believers; what a conviction to unbelievers would it be if Christians in this did answer their professions, and cheerfully welcome the news of rest!

Sect. IX. 8. It evidently discovers that we have been careless loiterers, that we have spent much time to little purpose, and that we have neglected and lost a great many warnings.[u] Have

[t] How oft hath it been revealed to me that I should daily preach and publicly contest, that our brethren are not to be lamented, who are delivered from this world by the call of God, when we know that they are not lost, but sent before! Departing, they lead us the way, as travellers and sailors use to do; that they may be desired, but not bewailed. And that we should not put on black clothes for them here, when they have put on white raiment there; that we should give the heathen occasion justly to reprehend us; that we lament those as dead and lost, whom we affirm to be with God; and that we condemn that faith by the testimony of our hearts, which we profess by the testimony of our speech. We are prevaricators of our faith and hope; and make that which we teach seem to them counterfeit, feigned, and dissembled. It will do us no good to prefer virtue in words, and destroy verity by our deeds. *Cyprian. de Mortalitate*, sect. 14. p. (mihi) 345.

[u] Ultima verbi nobilis Andr. Dudithii ad Ruterum discedentem verissima; Vale, inquit, et fœliciter vive, et inter vivendum bene mori disce; quæ ars est artium omnium difficillima, simulque præstantissima. Non pudet te reliquias vitæ tibi reservare? Et id solum tempus bonæ menti destinare, quod in nullam

we not had all our lifetime to prepare to die? So many years to make ready for one hour, and are we so unready and unwilling yet? What have we done, why have we lived, that the business of our lives is so much undone? Had we any greater matters to mind? Have we not foolishly wronged our souls in this? Would we have wished more frequent warnings! How oft hath death entered the habitations of our neighbours! How oft hath it knocked at our own doors! We have first heard that 'such an one is dead,' and then 'such an one,' and 'such an one,' till our towns have changed most of their inhabitants; and was not all this a sufficient warning to tell us that we were also mortals, and our own turn would shortly come? Nay, we have seen death raging in towns and fields, so many hundred a day dead of the pestilence, so many thousands slain by the sword? and did we not know it would reach to us at last? How many distempers have vexed our bodies; frequent languishings, consuming weaknesses, wasting fevers; here pain, and there trouble, that we have been forced to receive the sentence of death; and what were all these but so many messengers sent from God to tell us we must shortly die, as if we had heard a lively voice bidding us, 'Delay no more, but make you ready;' and are we unready and unwilling after all this? O careless, dead-hearted sinners, unworthy neglecters of God's warning, faithless betrayers of your own souls!

All these heinous aggravations do lie upon this sin of unwillingness to die, which I have laid down to make it hateful to my own soul, which is too much guilty of it, as well as yours; and for a further help to our prevailing against it, I shall adjoin these following considerations:

Sect. X. 1. Consider, "Not to die," were "never to be happy."[x] To escape death, were to miss of blessedness; except God should translate us as Enoch and Elias, which he never did before or since. If our hope in Christ were in this life only, we were then of all men most miserable: the epicure hath more pleasure to his flesh than the Christian; the drunkard, the whore-

rem conferri possit? Quam serum est tunc vivere incipere, cum desinendum est?—*Senecu de Brev. Vit.* c. 4.

[x] When we die, we pass over by death to immortality; and it is impossible that we should come to eternal life if we go not hence. This is no ending, but a passing on; and a reaching to eternity by the dispatch of our temporal journey. Who would not hasten to a better state? Who would not wish to be changed and reformed to the image of Christ, and to come quickly to the dignity of the heavenly grace?—*Cyprian. de Mortalit.* sect. 15. p. 346.

master, and the jovial lads, do swagger it out with gallantry and mirth, when a poor saint is mourning in a corner: yea, the very beasts of the field do eat, and drink, and skip, and play, and care for nothing, when many a Christian dwells with sorrows: so that if you would not die, and go to heaven, what would you have more than an epicure or a beast? What doth it avail us to fight with beasts, as men, if it were not for our hopes of a life to come: why do we pray, and fast, and mourn: why do we suffer the contempt of the world: why are we the scorn and hatred of all; if it were not for our hopes after we are dead? Why are we Christians, and not pagans and infidels, if we do not desire a life to come? Why, Christian, wouldst thou lose thy faith, and lose thy labour in all thy duties, and all thy sufferings? Wouldst thou lose thy hope, and lose all the end of thy life, and lose all the blood of Christ, and be contented with the portion of a worldling or a brute? If thou say No to this, how canst thou then be loth to die? As good old Milius said, when he was dying, and was asked whether he was willing to die or not, "Illius est nolle mori, qui nolit ire ad Christum."[y] A saying of Cyprian's, which he oft repeated, "Let him be loth to die, who is loth to be with Christ."[z]

Sect. XI. 2. Consider, Is God willing by death to glorify us; and are we unwilling to die that we may be glorified? Would God freely give us heaven; and are we unwilling to receive it? As the prince who would have taken the lame beggar into his coach, and he refused, said to him, "Optime mereris qui in luto hæreas," "Thou well deservest to stick in the dirt;" so may God to the refusers of rest, 'You well deserve to live in trouble.' Methinks, if a prince were willing to make you his heir, you should scarce be unwilling to accept it. Surely the refusing of such a kindness must needs discover ingratitude and unworthiness. As God hath resolved against them who make excuses when they should come to Christ, "Verily, none of these that were bidden shall taste of my supper;" so is it just

[y] Melch. Adam in vita Milii.

[z] Regnum Dei cœpit esse in proximo: præmium vitæ, et gaudium salutis æternæ, et perpetua lætitia, et possessio paradisi nuper amissa, mundo transeunte jam veniunt; jam terrenis cœlestia, et magna parvis, et caducis æterna succedunt. Quis hinc anxietatis et solicitudinis locus est? Quis inter hæc trepidus et mœstus est, nisi cui spes et fides deest? Ejus est enim mortem timere, qui ad Christum nolit ire. Ejus est ad Christum nolle ire, qui se non credat cum Christo incipere regnare; Justus enim fide vivet.—*Cyprian. de Mortalit.* sect. 2. p. 341.

with him to resolve against us who frame excuses when we should come to glory.[a] Ignatius, when he was condemned to be torn with wild beasts, was so afraid, lest by the prayers and means of his friends, he should lose the opportunity and benefit of martyrdom, that he often entreated them to let him alone, and not hinder his happiness; and tells them he was afraid of their love, lest it would hurt him, and their carnal friendship would keep him from death.

Sect. XII. 3. The Lord Jesus was willing to come from heaven to earth for us, and shall we be unwilling to remove from earth to heaven for ourselves and him?[b] Surely if we had been once possessed of heaven, and God should have sent us to earth again, as he did his Son for our sakes, we should then have been loth to remove indeed. It was another kind of change than ours is, which Christ did freely submit unto, to clothe himself with the garments of flesh, and to take upon him the form of a servant; to come from the bosom of the Father's love to bear his wrath which we should have borne. Shall he come down to our hell, from the height of glory to the depth of misery, to bring us up to his eternal rest? and shall we be after this unwilling?[c] Sure Christ had more cause to be unwilling; he might have said, 'What is it to me if these sinners suffer? If they value their flesh above their spirits, and their lusts above my Father's love, if they needs will sell their souls for nought, who is it fit should be the loser; and who should bear the blame and curse? Should I whom they have wronged? Must they wilfully transgress my law, and I undergo their deserved pain? Is it not enough that I bear the trespass from them, but I must also bear my Father's wrath, and satisfy the justice which they have wronged? Must I come down from heaven to earth, and clothe myself with human flesh; be spit upon, and scorned by man; and fast, and weep, and sweat, and suffer, and bleed, and die a cursed death? And all this for wretched worms, who would rather hazard all they had, and venture their souls and

[a] *Φοβοῦμαι γὰρ τὴν ἀγάπην ὑμῶν, μὴ αὐτὴ μὲ ἀδικήσῃ· ὑμῖν γὰρ εὐχερές ἐστιν ὃ θέλετε ποιῆσαι· ἐμοὶ δὲ δυσκολόν ἐστι τοῦ θεοῦ ἐπιτυχεῖν, &c.—Ignat. Epist. ad Romanos*, Edit. Usserii, p. 82.

[b] Cum dicis, Beate vivere volo, bonam rem quæris, sed non hic; si habuit hic istud Christus, habe et tu regione mortis tuæ: Quid ille invenit, attende.

[c] Venit de alta regione, et quid invenit nisi quod hic abundavit? Labores, dolores, mortem: Ecce quod hic habes et quod abundat, manducavit tecum. Quod hic in cella miseriæ tuæ abundavit, acetum hic bibit, fel hic bibit: ecce quod in cella tua invenit. At ad magnam mensam te invitavit, mensam solis mensam angelorum, ubi ipse panis est.—*August. sup. Joan.* 13.

God's favour, than they would forbear one forbidden morsel! Do they cast away themselves so slightly, and must I redeem them again so dearly?' Thus we see that Christ had much to have pleaded against his coming for man, and yet he pleaded none of this; he had reason enough to have made him unwilling, and yet did he voluntarily condescend. But we have no reason against our coming to him, except we will reason against our hopes, and plead for a perpetuity of our own calamities. Christ came down to fetch us up, and would we have him lose his blood and labour, and go away again without us? Hath he bought our rest at so dear a rate? Is our inheritance purchased with the blood of God, and are we after all this loth to enter? Ah! sirs, it was Christ, and not we, that had cause to be loth. The Lord forgive and heal this foolish ingratitude.

Sect. XIII. 4. Consider, Do we not combine with our most cruel, mortal foes, and jump with them in their most malicious design, while we are loth to die and go to heaven? [d] Where is the height of their malice; and what is the scope of all temptations; and what is the devil's daily business? Is it not to keep our souls from God? And shall we be well content with this, and join with Satan in our desires? What though it be not those eternal torments, yet it is the one half of hell which we wish to ourselves, while we desire to be absent from heaven and God. If thou shouldst take counsel of all thine enemies, if thou shouldst beat thy brains both night and day in studying to do thyself a mischief, what greater than this could it possibly be, to continue here on earth from God; excepting only hell itself? Oh, what sport is this to Satan, that his desires and thine should so concur; that when he sees he cannot get thee to hell, he can so long keep thee out of heaven, and make thee the earnest petitioner for it thyself! Oh, gratify not the devil so much to thy own displeasure!

Sect. XIV. 5. Do not our daily fears of death make our lives a continual torment? The fears of death being, as Erasmus saith, a sorer evil than death itself. [e] And thus, as Paul did die daily in regard of preparation, and in regard of the necessary sufferings of this life, so do we in regard of the torments and the useless sufferings which we make ourselves.

[d] Posse mori nunquam tollitur, nisi morte: quare Christus per mortem tulit posse mori, ut per resurrectionem natura perveniret ad immortalitatem. —*Card. Cusanus Operum*, vol. ii. exercit. lib. vii. p. 133.

[e] Timor mortis pejor quam ipsa mors.—*Erasm. Colloq.*

Those lives which might be full of joys in the daily contemplation of the life to come, and the sweet, delightful thoughts of bliss, how do we fill them up with terrors through all these causeless thoughts and fears! Thus do we consume our own comforts, and prey upon our truest pleasures. When we might lie down, and rise up, and walk abroad, with our hearts full of the joys of God, we continually fill them with perplexing fears. For he that fears dying, must be always fearing, because he hath always cause to expect it. And how can that man's life be comfortable, who lives in continual fear of losing his comforts?

Sect. XV. 6. Moreover, All these are self-created sufferings: as if it were not enough to be the deservers, but we must also be the executioners of our own calamities. As if God had not inflicted enough upon us, but we must inflict more upon ourselves! Is not death bitter enough to the flesh of itself, but we must double, and treble, and multiply its bitterness? Do we complain so much of the burden of our troubles, and yet daily add unto the weight? Surely, the state of poor mortals is sufficiently calamitous; they need not make it so much worse. The sufferings laid upon us by God, do all lead to happy issues; the progress is from suffering to patience, from thence to experience, and so to hope, and at last to glory. (Rom. v. 3, 4, viii. 17.) But the sufferings which we do make ourselves, have usually issues answerable to their causes. The motion is circular and endless; from sin to suffering, from suffering to sin, and so to suffering again, and so *in infinitum*; and not only so, but they multiply in their course; every sin is greater than the former, and so every suffering also greater. This is the natural progress of them, which, if mercy do intercept, no thanks to us. So that, except we think that God hath made us to be our own tormenters, we have small reason to nourish our fears of death.[f]

Sect. XVI. 7. Consider, further, They are all but useless, unprofitable fears. (Matt. vi. 27, 36.) As all our care cannot make one hair white or black, or add one cubit to our stature, so can neither our fear prevent our sufferings, nor delay our dying time an hour: willing or unwilling, we must away. Many a man's fears have hastened his end, but no man's ever did avert it. It is true, a cautelous fear or care concerning the danger after death, hath profited many, and is very useful to the preventing of that danger; but for a member of Christ, and an

[f] Eheu quam miserum est, fieri metuendo senem.—*Publius.*

heir of heaven, to be afraid of entering his own inheritance, this is a sinful, useless fear.[s]

Sect. XVII. 8. But though it be useless in respect of good, yet to Satan it is very serviceable. Our fears of dying ensnare our souls, and add strength to many temptations. Nay, when we are called to die for Christ, and put to it in a day of trial, it may draw us to deny the known truth, and forsake the Lord God himself. You look upon it now as a small sin, a common frailty of human nature; but if you look to the dangerous consequences of it, methinks it should move you to other thoughts. What made Peter deny his Lord? What makes apostates in suffering times forsake the truth, and the green blade of unrooted faith to wither before the heat of persecution? Fear of imprisonment and poverty may do much, but fear of death will do much more. When you see the gibbet, or hear the sentence, if this fear of dying prevail in you, you will straight begin to say as Peter, "I know not the man." When you see the faggots set, and fire ready, you will say as that apostate to the martyr, "Oh! the fire is hot, and nature is frail," forgetting that the fire of hell is hotter: Sirs, as light as you make of it, you know not of what force these fears are to separate your souls from Jesus Christ. Have we not lately had frequent experience of it? How many thousands have fled in fight, and turned their backs on a good cause, where they knew the honour of God was concerned, and their country's welfare was the prize for which they fought, and the hopes of their posterity did lie at the stake, and all through unworthy fear of dying! Have we not known those who, lying under a wounded conscience, and living in the practice of some known sin, durst scarce look the enemy in the face, because they durst not look death in the face, but have trembled, and drawn back, and cried, 'Alas! I dare not die: if I were in the case of such or such, I durst die.' He that dare not die, dare scarce fight valiantly. Therefore, we have seen in our late wars, that there is none more valiant than these two sorts: 1. Those who have conquered the fear of death by the power of faith; 2. And those who have extinguished it by desperate profaneness, and cast it away through stupid security. So much fear as we have of death, usually so much cowardice in the cause of God. How-

[s] If mortality do no more, yet this good it will do to Christians and the servants of God, that we be willing to desire martyrdom, when we learn not to fear death. They are our exercises, and not our funerals; they give to the soul the glory of fortitude, and by contempt of death, prepare for glory.—*Cyprian. de Mortalitat.* p. 344.

ever, it is an evident temptation and snare. Beside the multitude of unbelieving contrivances and discontents at the wise disposals of God, and hard thoughts of most of his providences, which this sin doth make us guilty of: besides, also, it loseth us much precious time, and that for the most part near our end. When time should be most precious of all to us, and when it should be employed to better purpose, then do we vainly and sinfully waste it in the fruitless issues of these distracting fears. So that you see how dangerous a snare these fears are, and how fruitful a parent of many evils.

Sect. XVIII. 9. Consider, What a competent time the most of us have had; some thirty, some forty, some fifty or sixty years. How many come to the grave younger, for one that lives to the shortest of these! Christ himself, as is generally thought, lived but thirty-three years on earth.[h] If it were to come as it is passed, you would think thirty years a long time. Did you not, long ago, in your threatening sickness, think with yourselves, 'Oh, if I might but enjoy one seven years more, or ten years more!' And now you have enjoyed perhaps more than you then begged, and are you nevertheless unwilling yet? except you would not die at all, but desire an immortality here on earth, which is a sin inconsistent with the truth of grace. If your sorrow be merely this, that you are mortal, you might as well have lamented it all your lives, for surely you could never be ignorant of this. Why should not a man that would die at all, be as well willing, at thirty or forty, if God see it meet, as at seventy or eighty; nay, usually when the longest day is come, men are as loth to depart as ever.[i] He that loseth so many years, hath more cause to bewail his own neglect, than to complain of the

[h] Helvetius and some other modern chronologers think he died in the thirty-fifth year of his age.

[i] Quid de rerum natura querimur? illa se benigne gessit. Vita, si scias uti, longa est.—*Seneca de Brevit. Vit.* c. 2. Non exiguum temporis habemus, sed multum perdimus. Satis longe vita, et in maximarum rerum consummationem large data est, si tota bene collocetur. Sed ubi per luxum et negligentiam defluit, ubi nulli rei bonæ impenditur, ultima demum necessitate cogente quam ire non intelleximus, transisse sentimus. Non accepimus brevem vitam, sed fecimus: nec inopes ejus, sed prodigi sumus.—*Ibid.* c. 1. The elect man hath a care in the body, of the worldly things of the place where he sojourneth, as a traveller in the inns and houses in his way; but without any trouble he leaveth the habitation, possession, and use, with a ready and cheerful mind, following him that leadeth him out of this life, upon no occasion turning back: he is thankful for his entertainment here, but he blesseth God for his departure, embracing the celestial mansion.—*Clemens Alexand. Stromat.* lib. iv. prope fin.

shortness of his time, and were better lament the wickedness of his life, than the brevity. Length of time doth not conquer corruption, it never withers nor decays through age. Except we receive an addition of grace, as well as time, we naturally grow the older the worse. Let us, then, be contented with our allotted proportion. And as we are convinced that we should not murmur against our assigned degree of wealth, of health, of honour, and other things here, so let us not be discontented with our allowed proportion of time. O my soul, depart in peace! Hast thou not here enjoyed a competent share? As thou wouldst not desire an unlimited state in wealth and honour, so desire it not in point of time. Is it fit that God or thou should be the sharer. If thou wert sensible how little thou deservest an hour of that patience which thou hast enjoyed, thou wouldst think thou hast had a large part. Wouldst thou have thy age called back again; canst thou eat thy bread, and have it too? Is it not divine wisdom that sets the bounds? God will not let one have all the work, nor all the suffering, nor all the honour of the work. He will honour himself by variety of instruments; by various persons and several ages, and not by one person or age. Seeing thou hast acted thine own part, and finished thine appointed course, come down contentedly, that others may succeed, who must have their turns as well as thou. As of all other outward things, so also of that time and life, thou mayest as well have too much, as too little: only of God and eternal life, thou canst never enjoy too much, nor too long. Great receivings will have great accounts; where the lease is longer, the fine and rent must be the greater. Much time hath much duty. Is it not as easy to answer for the receivings and the duties of thirty years, as of an hundred? Beg therefore for grace to improve it better, but be contented with thy share of time.

Sect. XIX. 10. Consider, Thou hast had a competency of the comforts of life, and not of naked time alone. God might have made thy life a misery; till thou hadst been as weary of possessing it, as thou art now afraid of losing it. If he had denied thee the benefits and ends of living, thy life would have been but a slender comfort. They in hell have life as well as we, and longer far than they desire. God might have suffered thee to have consumed thy days in ignorance, or to have spent thy life to the last hour, before he brought thee home to himself, and given thee the saving knowledge of Christ, and then thy life had

been short, though thy time long. But he hath opened thine eyes in the morning of thy days, and acquainted thee betimes with the trade of thy life. I know the best are but negligent loiterers, and spend not their time according to its worth;[k] but yet he that hath a hundred years' time, and loseth it all, lives not so long as he that hath but twenty, and bestows it well. It is too soon to go to hell at a hundred years old, and not too soon to go to heaven at twenty.[l] The means are to be valued in reference to their end; that is the best means which speedliest and surest obtaineth the end. He that hath enjoyed most of the ends of life, hath had the best life, and not he that hath lived longest. You that are acquainted with the life of grace, what, if you live but twenty or thirty years, would you change it for a thousand years of wickedness? God might have let you have lived like the ungodly world, and then you would have had cause to be afraid of dying. We have lived in a place and time of light; in Europe, not in Asia, Africa, or America; in England, not in Spain or Italy; in the age when knowledge doth most abound, and not in our forefathers' days of darkness. We have lived among Bibles, sermons, books, and Christians. As one acre of fruitful soil is better than many of barren commons; as the possession of a kingdom for one year, is better than a lease of a cottage for twenty; so twenty or thirty years living in such a place or age as we, is better than Methuselah's age, in the case of most of the world besides. And shall we not then be contented with our portion? If we who are ministers of the Gospel have seen abundant fruit of our labours; if God hath blessed our labour in seven years, more than some others in twenty or thirty; if God have made us the happy, though unworthy, means of converting and saving more souls at a sermon, than some

[k] Solus sapiens generis humani legibus solvitur: omnia illi secula, aut Deo serviunt. Transivit tempus? Aliquid ex hoc, recordatione comprehendit. Instat? Hoc utitur. Venturum est? Hoc percipit. Longum illi vitam facit omnium temporum in unum collatio. Illorum brevissima ac solicitissima ætas est, qui præteritorum obliviscuntur, præsentia negligunt, de futuro timent: cum ad extremum venerint, sero intelligunt, miseri, tamdiu se cum nihil agunt occupatos fuisse.—*Seneca de Brevit. Vit.* 15.

[l] Iter imperfectum erit, si in media parte, aut citra petitum locum steteris. Vita non est imperfecta, si honesta est. Ubicunque desines, si bene desinis, tota est.—*Seneca*, Epist. 77. p. 688. Nemo tam imperitus est, ut nesciat sibi quandoque moriendum; tamen cum prope accesserit, tergiversatur, tremit, plorat. Nonne tibi videbitur stultissimus omnium qui fleverit quod ante annos mille non vixerat? Atqui stultus est qui flet, quod post annos mille non vivet. Hæc paria sunt, non eris nec fuisti.—*Ibid.* p. 689.

better men in all their lives, what cause have we to complain of the shortness of our time in the work of God? Would unprofitable, unsuccessful preaching have been comfortable? Will it do us good to labour to little purpose, so we may but labour long? If our desires of living are for the service of the church, as our deceitful hearts are still pretending, then surely if God honour us to do the more service, though in the lesser time, we have our desire. God will have each to have his share; when we have had ours, let us rest contented. Persuade, then, thy backward soul to its duty, and argue down these dreadful thoughts. Unworthy wretch! hath thy Father allowed thee so large a part, and caused thy lot to fall so well,[m] and given thee thine abode in pleasant places, and filled up all thy life with mercies, and dost thou think thy share too small? Is not that which thy life doth want in length, made up in breadth, and weight, and sweetness? Lay all together, and look about thee, and tell me how many of thy neighbours have more; how many in all the town or country have had a better share than thou. Why mightest not thou have been one of the thousands, whose carcasses thou hast seen scattered as dung on the earth; or why mightest not thou have been one that is useless in the church, and an unprofitable burden to the place thou livest in? What a multitude of hours of consolation; of delightful sabbaths; of pleasant studies; of precious companions; of wondrous deliverances; of excellent opportunities; of fruitful labours; of joyful tidings; of sweet experiences; of astonishing providences; hath thy life partaked of! So that many a hundred who have each of them lived a hundred years, have not altogether enjoyed so much, and yet art thou not satisfied with thy lot? Hath thy life been so sweet that thou art loth to leave it? Is that the thanks thou returnest to him, who sweetened it to draw thee to his own sweetness? Indeed, if this had been all thy portion, I could not blame thee to be discontented. And yet let me tell thee too, that of all these souls, who have no other portion, but receive all their good things in this life, there is few or none even of them who ever had so full a share as thyself. And hast thou not, then, had a fair proportion, for one that must shortly have heaven besides? O foolish soul!

[m] The merchant that arriveth safely with a rich lading of gold, spices, and precious things, doth more heartily thank God for his voyage, than he that goes as far for some smaller commodity; so here, saith Seneca, Epist. lib. iii. p. 671.

would thou wert as covetous after eternity, as thou art for a fading, perishing life; and after the blessed presence of God, as thou art for continuance with earth and sin! Then thou wouldst rather look through the windows, and cry through the lattices, "Why is his chariot so long a coming; why tarry the wheels of his chariots?" (Judges v. 28.) How long, Lord! how long!

Sect. XX. 11. Consider, What if God should grant thy desire, and let thee live yet many years, but withal should strip thee of the comforts of life, and deny thee the mercies which thou hast hitherto enjoyed: would this be a blessing worth the begging for? [a] Might not God in judgment give thee life, as he gave the murmuring Israelites quails; or as he ofttimes gives men riches and honour, when he sees them over-earnest for it? Might he not justly say to thee, Seeing thou hadst rather linger on earth, than come away and enjoy my presence; seeing thou art so greedy of life, take it, and a curse with it; never let fruit grow on it more, nor the sun of comfort shine upon it, nor the dew of my blessing ever water it. Let thy table be a snare; let thy friends be thy sorrow; let thy riches be corrupted, and the rust of thy silver eat thy flesh. (Jam. v. 2, 3.) Go, hear sermons as long as thou wilt, but let never sermon do thee good more; let all thou hearest make against thee, and increase the smart of thy wounded spirit. If thou love preaching better than heaven, go and preach till thou be weary, but never profit soul more. Sirs, what if God should thus chastise our inordinate desires of living, were it not just; and what good would our lives then do us? Seest thou not some that spend their days on their couch in groaning; and some in begging by the highway sides; and others in seeking bread from door to door; and most of the world in labouring for food and raiment, and living only that they may live, and losing the ends and benefits of life? Why, what good would such a life do thee, were it never so long; when thy soul shall serve thee only instead of salt, to keep thy body from stinking? God might give thee life, till thou art weary of living, and as glad to be rid of it, as Judas or Ahitophel, and make thee like many miserable creatures in the world, who can hardly forbear laying violent hands on them-

[a] How far a man may desire death, and how far not, see Calvin on Jonah iv. p. 351. In sum, he shows that we may not desire it out of mere impatience under poverty, sickness, or other suffering; but in weariness of sinning we may: but so, as yet patiently to stay God's time, and be willing to die when he calls.

selves. Be not, therefore, so importunate for life, which may prove a judgment instead of a blessing.

Sect. XXI. 12. Consider, How many of the precious saints of God, of all ages and places, have gone before thee. Thou art not to enter an untrodden path, nor appointed first to break the ice. Except only Enoch and Elias, which of the saints have escaped death? And art thou better than they? There are many millions of saints dead, more than do now remain on earth. What a number of thine own bosom friends, and intimate acquaintance, and companions in duty, are now there; and why shouldst thou be so loth to follow? Nay, hath not Jesus Christ himself gone this way?[o] Hath he not sanctified the grave to us, and perfumed the dust with his own body; and art thou loth to follow him too? Oh! rather let us say as Thomas, "Let us also go, and die with him;" or rather, let us suffer with him, that we may be glorified together with him.[p]

Many suchlike considerations might be added, as that Christ hath taken out the sting. How light the saints have made of it: how cheerfully the very pagans have entertained it! &c.[q] But because all that is hitherto spoken, is also conducible to the same purpose, I pass them by. If what hath been said will not persuade, Scripture and reason have little force.

I have said the more on this subject, finding it so needful to myself and others; finding that among so many Christians, who could do and suffer much for Christ, there is yet so few that can willingly die; and of many who have somewhat subdued other corruptions, so few have got the conquest of this. This caused me to draw forth these arrows from the quiver of Scripture, and spend them against it.

Sect. XXII. I will only yet answer some objections, and so conclude this use.

[o] Heretofore indeed, before the coming of our Saviour, death was terrible even to holy men, and all men lamented the dying, as if they were perishing: but when Christ had raised his body, death was no more to be feared; and all that believe in Christ do trample upon it as nothing, and had rather die a thousand times, than deny the faith of Christ. For they know that by dying they do not perish, but live, and by the resurrection are made immortal.—*Athanas. de Incarnat. Verbi.*

[p] It is certainly reported that St. Peter, when he saw his wife led to death, was glad that she was called to it, and that she was going home; and strongly exhorting and comforting her, he called her by her name, saying, "Ho! see thou remember the Lord."—*Clem. Alexand. Stromat.* lib. vii.

[q] Read the strange examples of heathens in Seneca Epist. ad Lucil. 24.

1. Object. Oh! if I were but certain of heaven, I should then never stick at dying.

Answ. 1. Search, for all that, whether some of the forementioned causes may not be in fault, as well as this.

2. Didst thou not say so long ago? Have you not been in this song this many years? If you are yet uncertain, whose fault is it? You have had nothing else to do with your lives, nor no greater matter than this to mind. Were you not better presently fall to the trial, till you have put the question out of doubt? Must God stay while you trifle; and must his patience be continued to cherish your negligence? If thou have played the loiterer, do so no longer. Go, search thy soul, and follow the search close, till thou come to a clear discovery. Begin to night; stay not till the next morning. Certainty comes not by length of time, but by the blessing of the Spirit upon wise and faithful trial. You may linger out thus twenty years more, and be still as uncertain as now you are.

3. A perfect certainty may not be expected; we shall still be deficient in that as well as in other things. They who think the apostle speaks absolutely, and not comparatively, of a perfect assurance in the very degree, when he mentions a plerophory or full assurance, I know no reason but they may expect perfection in all things else as well as this. When you have done all, you will know this but in part. If your belief of that scripture which saith, "Believe and be saved," be imperfect; and if your knowledge, whether your own deceitful hearts do sincerely believe or not, be imperfect; or if but one of these two be imperfect, the result or conclusion must needs be so too. If you would then stay till you are perfectly certain, you may stay for ever: if you have attained assurance but in some degree, or got but the grounds for assurance laid, it is then the speediest and surest way, to desire rather to be quickly in rest; for then, and never till then, will both the grounds and assurance be fully perfect.

4. Both your assurance, and the comfort thereof, is the gift of the Spirit, who is a free bestower: and God's usual time to be largest in mercy, is when his people are deepest in necessity. A mercy in season is the sweetest mercy. I could give you here abundance of late examples of those who have languished for assurance and comfort; some all their sickness, and some most of their lives: and when they have been near to death they have received in abundance. Never fear death, then,

through imperfection of assurance; for that is the most usual time of all, when God most fully and sweetly bestows it.

Object. 2. Oh! but the church's necessities are great. God hath made me useful in my place; so that the loss will be to many; or else, methinks I could willingly die.

Sect. XXIII. Answ. This may be the case of some, but yet remember the heart is deceitful. God is often pretended, when ourselves are intended. But if this be it that sticks with thee indeed, consider, Wilt thou pretend to be wiser than God? Doth not he know how to provide for his church? Cannot he do his work without thee, or find out instruments enough besides thee? Think not too highly of thyself, because God hath made thee useful. Must the church needs fall when thou art gone? Art thou the foundation on which it is built? Could God take away a Moses, an Aaron, David, Elias, &c., and find a supply for all their places; and cannot he also find a supply for thine? This is to derogate from God too much, and to arrogate too much unto thyself. Neither art thou so merciful as God, nor canst love the church so well as he. As his interest is infinitely beyond thine, so is his tender care and bounty. But of this before.[r]

Yet mistake me not in all that I have said. I deny not but that it is lawful and necessary for a Christian, upon both the before-mentioned grounds, to desire God to delay his death, both for a further opportunity of gaining assurance, and also to be further serviceable to the church. See Phil. ii. 26, 27. Time and life is a most precious mercy; not so much because of what we here enjoy, but because eternity of joy or torment dependeth on this time, when it must go with man for ever in heaven or hell,

[r] As Jac. Monach. said to Dr. Haverenter (ut Melch. Adam in ejus vita), so Frederick the Third, Prince Elector Palsgrave of Rhine, when he was dying at Heidelberg, said to his friends, "I have lived long enough on earth for you, I must now go live for myself in heaven for ever." As Jac. Grynæus in the last words in his 'Commentary on the Hebrews:' "So, methinks, when ministers have lived long in hard labour and sufferings for God and the church, they should be willing to live in heaven for God and themselves." I may say of our service, as Cyprian to some that were loth to die, because they would fain die martyrs; "I had," saith one, "fully set my heart on it, and devoted myself to martyrdom;" martyrdom is not in thy power, but is God's gift. Nor canst thou say, thou hast lost that which thou knowest not whether thou wert worthy to receive. God, the Searcher of the heart, who saw thee prepared in resolution, will give the reward for thy resolution. As an evil thought is seen in the wicked; so a purpose to confess Christ, and a soul given up to good, shall be crowned by God the Judge. For it is one thing to want a heart for martyrdom, and another to want martyrdom, when we have a heart. God will judge thee such as he finds thee. For it is not our blood that God desires, but our faith or fidelity.—*Cypr. de Mortalitat.* sect. xii. p. 345.

according to the provision he makes on earth; and they that will find a treasure in heaven must now lay it up there. (Matt. vi. 19, 20.) I do not blame a man that is well in his wits, if he be loth to die, till he hath some comfortable assurance that it shall certainly go well with him in another world. And every man's assurance, as I have proved, is imperfect. And there I doubt not but, 1. We may pray for recovery from sicknesses. 2. And may rejoice in it, and give thanks for it, as a great mercy. 3. And may pray hard for our godly and ungodly friends in their sickness. 4. And must value our time highly, and improve it, as a mercy which we must be accountable for. 5. And every godly man is so useful to the church, ordinarily, that, even for the church's service, he may desire to live longer, as Paul did, even till he come to the full age of man, and while he is able to serve the church, and it hath need of him. No man should be over hasty to a state that must never be changed, when both assurance of glory and his fitness for it are still imperfect; and ordinarily the saints grow fitter in their age. But then this must not be in love of earth, but we must take it as our present loss to be kept from heaven, though it may tend to the church's and our own future advantage, and so may be desired: so that you must still see that heaven be valued and loved above earth, even when you have cause to pray for longer time, as she that longs to be married to a prince, may desire delay for preparation. But, First, This is nothing to their case who are still delaying, and never willing; whose true discontents are at death itself, more than at the unseasonableness of dying. Secondly, Though such desires are sometimes lawful, yet must they be carefully bounded and moderated; to which end are the former considerations. We must not be too absolute and peremptory in our desires, but cheerfully yield to God's disposal. The rightest temper is that of Paul's, to be in a strait between two; desiring to depart, and be with Christ, and yet to stay while God will have us, to do the church the utmost service. But, alas! we are seldom in this strait: our desires run out all one way, and that for the flesh, and not the church. (Phil. i. 23.) Our straits are only for fear of dying, and not betwixt the earnest desires of dying, and of living. He that desireth life only to prepare for heaven, doth love heaven better than life on earth, for the end is still more beloved than all the means.

Sect. XXIV. Object. But is not death a punishment of God

for sin? Doth not Scripture call it the "king of feare;" and nature, above all other evils, abhor it?[s]

Answ. I will not meddle with that which is controversial in this: whether death be properly a punishment or not: but grant, that, in itself considered, it may be called evil, as being naturally the dissolution of the creature. Yet being sanctified to us by Christ, and being the season and occasion of so great a good, as is the present possession of God in Christ, it may be welcomed with a glad submission, if not with desire. Christ affords us grounds enough to comfort us against this natural evil; and therefore endues us with the principle of grace, to raise us above the reach of nature.

For all those low and poor objections, as leaving house, goods, and friends, leaving our children unprovided, &c., I pass them over, as of lesser moment, than to take much with men of grace.

Sect. XXV. Lastly, Understand me in this also, that I have spoken all this to the faithful soul. I persuade not the ungodly from fearing death. It is a wonder rather that they fear it no more, and spend not their days in continual horror, as is said before. Truly, but that we know a stone is insensible, and a hard heart is dead and stupid, or else a man would admire how poor souls can live in ease and quietness, that must be turned out of these bodies into everlasting flames; or that be not sure, at least, if they should die this night, whether they shall lodge in heaven or hell the next, especially when many are called, and so few chosen, and the righteous themselves are scarcely saved. One would think such men should eat their bread with trembling, and the thoughts of their danger should keep them waking in the night, and they should fall presently a searching themselves, inquiring of others, and crying to God, that if it were possible they might quickly be out of this danger, and so their hearts be freed from horror. For a man to quake at the thoughts of

[s] Jam nemo est qui esse nolit, quam nemo est qui non beatus esse velit. Quomodo enim potest beatus esse, si nihil sit? Ita vi quadam naturali ipsum esse jucundum est, ut non ob aliud, et hi qui miseri sunt, nolint interire. Et cum se miseros esse sentiant, non seipsos de rebus, sed miseriam suam potius auferri velint; etiam miserrimus, siquis immortalitatem daret, qua nec ipsa miseria moreretur; proposito sibi quod si in eadem miseria semper esse nollent, nulli et nusquam essent futuri, sed omni modo perituri; profecto exultarent lætitia, et sic semper eligerent esse, quam omnino non esse.—*August. de Civit.* lib. xi. cap. 26. Sed hoc de tolerabili tantum miseria intelligendum est.

death that looks by it to be dispossessed of his happiness, and knoweth not whither he is next to go, this is no wonder. But for the saints to fear their passage by death to rest, this is an unreasonable, hurtful fear. [t]

CHAP. III.

Motives to a heavenly Life.

SECT. I. We have now, by the guidance of the word of the Lord, and by the assistance of his Spirit, showed you the nature of the rest of the saints, and acquainted you with some duties in relation thereto. We come now to the close of all, to press you to the great duty, which I chiefly intended, when I begun this subject, and have here reserved it to the last place, because I know hearers are usually of slippery memories, yet apt to retain the last that is spoken, though they forget all that went before. Dear friends, it is pity that either you or I should forget any thing of that which doth so nearly concern us, as this eternal rest of the saints doth. But if you must needs forget something, let it be any thing else, rather than this: let it be rather all that I have hitherto said (though I hope of better) than this one ensuing use.

Is there a rest, and such a rest remaining for us? Why then are our thoughts no more upon it? Why are not our hearts continually there? Why dwell we not there in constant contemplation? Sirs, ask your hearts in good earnest, What is the cause of this neglect? Are we reasonable in this, or are we not? Hath the eternal God provided us such a glory, and promised to take us up to dwell with himself, and is not this worth the thinking on? Should not the strongest desires of our hearts be after it, and the daily delights of our souls be there? Do we believe this; and can we yet forget and neglect it? What is

[t] For comfort in the death of friends, the nine considerations of Gerson are excellent, Operum, part. iv. fol. 146; and his following tractate De Consolatione Mortis Parentum. Lege et Grotii Epist. ad Gal. 26. p. 67: Mali cum non possint de sua vita rectam rationem reddere, cumque timeant coram judice sistere, dilatant mortem quantum possunt, corpus lautis opiparisque ciborum generibus pascendo: ut si possent in perpetuam in hac vita permanerent. Mulier adultera, quæ domi adulterum habet, quando maritus ad ostium pulsat, non ita cito aperit, sed tardatur, ut interim abscondere possit adulterum; ita mali, &c.—*Stella in Luke* xii. tom. ii. p. 109. a.

the matter? Will not God give us leave to approach this light; or will he not suffer our souls to taste and see it? Why, then, what mean all his earnest invitations? Why doth he so condemn all our earthly-mindedness, and command us to set our affections above? Ah, vile hearts! if God were against it, we were likelier to be for it; when he would have us to keep our station, then we are aspiring to be like God, and are ready to invade the divine prerogatives; but when he commands our hearts to heaven, then they will not stir an inch: like our predecessors the sinful Israelites: when God would have them march for Canaan, then they mutiny, and will not stir; either they fear the giants, or the walled cities, or want necessaries; something hinders them; but when God bids them not go, then will they needs be presently marching, and fight they will, though it be to their overthrow. If the fore-thoughts of glory were forbidden fruits, perhaps we should be sooner drawn unto them, and we should itch, as the Bethshemites, to be looking into this ark. Sure I am, where God hath forbidden us to place our thoughts and our delights, thither it is easy enough to draw them. If he say, "Love not the world, nor the things of the world," we dote upon it nevertheless. We have love enough if the world require it, and thoughts enough to pursue our profits. How delightfully and unweariedly can we think of vanity; and day after day employ our minds about the creature! And have we no thoughts of this our rest? How freely and how frequently can we think of our pleasures, our friends, our labours, our flesh, our lusts, our common studies, our news; yea, our very miseries, our wrongs, our sufferings, and our fears! But where is the Christian whose heart is on his rest? Why, sirs, what is the matter? Why are we not taken up with the views of glory, and our souls more accustomed to these delightful meditations? Are we so full of joy that we need no more: or, is there no matter in heaven for our joyous thoughts: or rather, are not our hearts carnal and blockish? Earth will to earth. Had we more spirit, it would be otherwise with us. As the Jews use to cast to the ground the book of Esther before they read it, because the name of God is not in it; and as Augustin cast by Cicero's writings, because they contained not the name of Jesus; so let us humble and cast down these sensual hearts that have in them no more of Christ and glory. As we should not own our duties any further than somewhat of Christ is in them, so should we no further own our hearts; and as we should

delight in the creatures no further than they have reference to Christ and eternity, so should we no further approve of our own hearts. If there were little of Christ and heaven in our mouths, but the world were the only subject of our speeches, then all would account us to be ungodly, why then may we not call our hearts ungodly that have so little delight in Christ and heaven? A holy tongue will not excuse or secure a profane heart. Why did Christ pronounce his disciples' eyes and ears so blessed, but as they were doors to let in Christ by his works and words into their heart? Oh, blessed are the eyes that so see, and the ears that so hear, that the heart is thereby raised to this blessed, heavenly frame! Sirs, so much of your hearts as is empty of Christ and heaven, let it be filled with shame and sorrow, and not with ease.

Sect. II. But let me turn my reprehension to exhortation, that you would turn this conviction into reformation. And I have the more hope because I here address myself to men of conscience, that dare not wilfully disobey God; and to men whose relations to God are many and near, and therefore, methinks, there should need the fewer words to persuade their hearts to him; yea, because I speak to no other men but only them whose portion is there, whose hopes are there, and who have forsaken all, that they may enjoy this glory; and shall I be discouraged from persuading such to be heavenly-minded? Why, fellow Christians, if you will not hear and obey, who will? Well may we be discouraged to exhort the poor, blind, ungodly world, and may say, as Moses, "Behold the children of Israel have not hearkened unto me, how then shall Pharaoh hear me?" (Exod. xvi. 12.) Whoever thou art, therefore, that readest these lines, I require thee, as thou tenderest thine allegiance to the God of heaven, as ever thou hopest for a part in this glory, that thou presently take thy heart to task; chide it for its wilful strangeness to God; turn thy thoughts from the pursuit of vanity; bend thy soul to study eternity; busy it about the life to come; habituate thyself to such contemplations, and let not those thoughts be seldom and cursory; but settle upon them: dwell here; bathe thy soul in heaven's delights; drench thine affections in these rivers of pleasure, or rather, in this sea of consolation; and if thy backward soul begin to flag, and thy loose thoughts to fly abroad, call them back, hold them to their work, put them on, bear not with their laziness, do not connive at one neglect; and when thou hast once in obedience to God tried this

work, and followed on till thou hast got acquainted with it, and kept a close guard upon thy thoughts till they are accustomed to obey, and till thou hast got some mastery over them, thou wilt then find thyself in the suburbs of heaven, and, as it were, in a new world; thou wilt then find, indeed, that there is sweetness in the work and way of God, and that the life of Christianity is a life of joy. Thou wilt meet with those abundant consolations, which thou hast prayed, and panted, and groaned after, and which so few Christians do here obtain, because they know not the way to them, or else make not conscience of walking in it.

You see the work now before you: this, this is that I would fain persuade your souls to practise. Beloved friends, and christian neighbours, who hear me this day, let me bespeak your consciences in the name of Christ, and command you by the authority I have received from Christ, that you faithfully set upon this weighty duty, and fix your eye more steadfastly on your rest, and daily delight in the forethoughts thereof. I have persuaded you to many other duties, and (I bless God) many of you have obeyed, and I hope never to find you at that pass as to say, when you perceive the command of the Lord, that you will not be persuaded, nor obey; if I should, it were high time to bewail your misery. Why, you may almost as well say, 'We will not obey,' as sit still and not obey. Christians, I beseech you, as you take me for your teacher, and have called me hitherto, so hearken to this doctrine. If ever I shall prevail with you in any thing, let me prevail with you in this, to set your hearts where you expect a rest and treasure. Do you not remember that when you called me to be your teacher, you promised me under your hands that you would faithfully and conscionably endeavour the receiving every truth, and obeying every command which I should from the word of God manifest to you? I now charge your promise upon you: I never delivered to you a more apparent truth, nor pressed upon you a more apparent duty than this. If I knew you would not obey, what should I do here preaching? Not that I desire you to receive it chiefly as from me, but as from Christ, on whose message I come. Methinks, if a child should show you Scripture, and speak to you the word of God, you should not dare to disobey it. Do not wonder that I persuade you so earnestly, though indeed if we were truly reasonable in spiritual things, as we are in common, it would be a real wonder that men should need so much per-

suasion to so sweet and plain a duty; but I know the employment is high, the heart is earthly, and will still draw back; the temptations and hinderances will be many and great, and therefore I fear before we have done, and laid open more fully the nature of the duty, that you will confess all these persuasions little enough. The Lord grant they prove not so too little, as to fail of success, and leave you as they find you. Say not, 'We are unable to set our own hearts on heaven, this must be the work of God only, and therefore all your exhortation is in vain,' for I tell you, though God be the chief disposer of your hearts, yet next under him you have the greatest command of them yourselves, and a great power in the ordering of your own thoughts, and for determining your own wills in their choice: though without Christ you can do nothing, yet under him you may do much, and must do much, or else it will be undone, and you undone through your neglect. Do your own parts, and you have no cause to distrust whether Christ will do his. Do not your own consciences tell you, when your thoughts fly abroad, that you might do more than you do to restrain them; and when your hearts lie flat, and neglect eternity, and seldom mind the joys before you, that most of this neglect is wilful? If you be to study a set speech, you can force your thoughts to the intended subject; if a minister be to study a sermon, he can force his thoughts to the most saving truths, and that without any special grace; might not a true Christian then mind more the things of the life to come, if he did not neglect to exercise that authority over his own thoughts which God hath given him? Especially in such a work as this, where he may more confidently expect the assistance of Christ, who useth not to forsake his people in the work he sets them on. If a carnal minister can make it his work to study about Christ and heaven through all his lifetime, and all because it is the trade he lives by, and knows not how to subsist without it, why, then, methinks a spiritual Christian should study as constantly the joys of heaven, because it is the very business he lives for, and that the place he must be in for ever. If the cook can find in his heart to labour and sweat about your meat, because it is the trade that maintains him, though perhaps he taste it not himself, methinks then you, for whom it is prepared, should willingly bestow that daily pains to taste its sweetness, and feed upon it; and if it were about your bodily food, you would think it no great pains neither. A good stomach takes it for no great

abour to eat and drink of the best till it be satisfied; nor needs it any great invitation thereto. Christians, if your souls were sound and right, they would perceive incomparably more delight and sweetness in knowing, thinking, believing, loving, and rejoicing in your future blessedness in the fruition of God, than the soundest stomach finds in its food, or the strongest senses in the enjoyment of their objects; so little painful would this work be to you, and so little should I need to press you to it. It is no great pains to you to think of a friend, or any thing else that you dearly love, and as little would it be to think of glory, if your love and delight were truly there. If you do but see some jewel, or treasure, you need not long exhortations to stir up your desires, the very sight of it is motive enough. If you see the fire when you are cold, or see a house in a stormy day, or see a safe harbour from a tempestuous sea, you need not be told what use to make of it; the sight doth presently direct your thought: you think, you look, you long, till you obtain it. Why should it not be so in the present case? Sirs, one would think, to show you this crown and glory of the saints, should be motive enough to make you desire it; to show you that harbour where you may be safe from all dangers, should soon teach you what use to make of it, and should bend your daily studies towards it; but because I know while we have flesh about us, and any remnants of that carnal mind which is enmity to God, and to this noble work, that all motives are little enough; and because my own, and others' sad experiences tell me, how hardly the best are drawn to a constancy and faithfulness in this duty, I will here lay down some moving considerations, which, if you will but vouchsafe to ponder thoroughly, and deliberately weigh with an impartial judgment, I doubt not but they will prove effectual with your hearts, and make you resolve upon this excellent duty. I pray you, friends, let them not fall to the ground, but take them up, and try them, and if you find them concern you, make much of them, and obey them accordingly.

Sect. III. 1. Consider, A heart set upon heaven will be one of the most unquestionable evidences of thy sincerity, and a clear discovery of a true work of saving grace upon thy soul.[a] You are much in inquiring after marks of sincerity, and I blame you not: it is dangerous mistaking when a man's salvation lies

[a] In this do true Christians differ from all other men; and the difference is very great; to wit, in that the mind and understanding of Christians is always conversant about heavenly cogitations, and is beholding of celestial excellences, because of the participation of the Holy Ghost; as, also, in that they

upon it. You are oft asking, 'How shall I know that I am truly sanctified?' Why, here is a mark that will not deceive you, if you can truly say that you are possessed of it: even, a heart set upon heaven. Would you have a sign infallible, not from me, or from the mouth of any man, but from the mouth of Jesus Christ himself, which all the enemies of the use of marks can lay no exception against? Why, here is such an one, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." (Matt. vi. 21.) Know once assuredly where your heart is, and you may easily know that your treasure is there. God is the saints' treasure and happiness: heaven is the place where they must fully enjoy him. A heart therefore set upon heaven is no more but a heart set upon God, desiring after this full enjoyment: and, surely, a heart set upon God through Christ, is the truest evidence of saving grace. External actions are easiest discovered, but those of the heart are the surest evidences. When thy learning will be no good proof of thy grace; when thy knowledge, thy duties, and thy gifts, will fail thee; when arguments from thy tongue and thy hand may be confuted, yet then will this argument from the bent of thy heart prove thee sincere. Take a poor Christian that can scarce speak true English about religion, that hath a weak understanding, a failing memory, a stammering tongue, yet his heart is set on God, he hath chosen him for his portion; his thoughts are on eternity; his desires there, his dwelling there; he cries out, 'O that I were there!' He takes that day for a time of imprisonment, wherein he hath not taken one refreshing view of eternity. I had rather die in this man's condition, and have my soul in his soul's case, than in the case of him that hath the most eminent gifts, and is most admired for parts and duty, whose heart is not thus taken up with God. The man that Christ will find out at the last day, and condemn for the want of a wedding garment, will he be that wants this frame of heart. The question will not then be, 'How much you have known, or professed, or talked?' but, 'How much you have loved, and where was your heart?' Why, then, Christians, as you would have a sure testimony of the love of God, and a sure proof of your title to glory, labour to get your hearts above. God will acknowledge that you really love him, and take you for faithful friends indeed, when he sees your

are born of God from above, and thought meet to be the sons of God in truth and in power; and by great labours, and sweat, after long time, they shall arrive at perfection, stability, and rest.—*Macarius Hom.* Hinc sequitur, cœlo renunciare qui in mundo fælices esse appetunt.—*Calvin in Matt.* vi. 21.

hearts are set upon him. Get but your hearts once truly in heaven, and, without all question, yourselves will follow. If sin and Satan keep not thence your affections, they will never be able to keep away your persons.

Sect. IV. 2. Consider, A heart in heaven is the highest excellency of your spirits here, and the noblest part of your christian disposition: as there is not only a difference between men and beasts, but also among men, between the noble and the base; so there is not only a common excellency, whereby a Christian differs from the world, but also a peculiar nobleness of spirit, whereby the more excellent differ from the rest: and this lies especially in a higher and more heavenly frame of spirit. Only man, of all inferior creatures, is made with a face directed heavenward: but other creatures have their faces to the earth. As the noblest of creatures, so the noblest of Christians are they that are set most direct for heaven.[x] As Saul is called a choice and goodly man, higher by the head than all the company; so is he the most choice and goodly Christian, whose head and heart is thus the highest. (1 Sam. iv. 2, and x. 23, 24.) Men of noble birth and spirits, do mind high and great affairs, and not the smaller things of low poverty.[y] Their discourse is of councils and matters of state, of the government of the commonwealth, and public things: and not of the countryman's petty employments. Oh! to hear such a heavenly saint, who hath fetched a journey into heaven by faith, and hath been raised up to God in his contemplations, and is newly come down from the views of Christ, what discoveries will he make of those superior regions! What ravishing expressions drop from his lips! How high and sacred is his discourse! Enough to make the ignorant world astonished, and perhaps say, "Much study hath made them mad:" (Acts xxvi. 24:) and enough to convince an understanding hearer that they have seen the Lord: and to make one say, 'No man could speak such words

[x] Read Bishop Hall's thirty-second soliloquy, called, 'Acquaintance with Heaven,' p. 131. Os homini sublime dedit, &c.

[y] Of so many divers religions and manners of serving God, which are or may be in the world, they seem to be the most noble, and to have the greatest appearance of truth, which without great external and corporal service, such as popish superstitions and formalities are, draw the soul into itself, and raise it by pure contemplation, to admire and adore the greatness and infinite majesty of the first Cause of all things, and the Essence of essences, without any great declaration or determination thereof, acknowledging it to be goodness, perfection, and infiniteness, wholly incomprehensible. This is to approach to the religion of angels, and adore God in spirit and truth.—*Charron of Wisd.* lib. ii. cap. 2. p. 297.

as these, except he had been with God.' This, this is the noble Christian; as Bucholcer's hearers concluded, when he had preached his last sermon, being carried between two into the church, because of his weakness, and there most admirably discoursed of the blessedness of souls departed this life, " Cæteros concionatores à Bucholcero semper omnes, illo autem die etiam ipsum à sese superatum," that Bucholcer did ever excel other preachers, but that day he excelled himself: so may I conclude of the heavenly Christian, he ever excelleth the rest of men, but when he is nearest heaven he excelleth himself. As those are the most famous mountains that are highest; and those the fairest trees that are tallest;[s] and those the most glorious pyramids and buildings whose tops do reach nearest to heaven; so is he the choicest Christian, whose heart is most frequently and most delightfully there. If a man have lived near the king, or have travelled to see the sultan of Persia, or the great Turk, he will make this a matter of boasting, and thinks himself one step higher than his private neighbours, that live at home. What shall we then judge of him that daily travels as far as heaven, and there hath seen the King of kings? That hath frequent admittance into the Divine presence, and feasteth his soul upon the tree of life? For my part, I value this man before the ablest, the richest, the most learned in the world.

Sect. V. 3. Consider, A heavenly mind is a joyful mind; this is the nearest and the truest way to live a life of comfort.[a] And without this, you must needs be uncomfortable. Can a man be at the fire, and not be warm; or in the sunshine, and not have light? Can your heart be in heaven, and not have comfort? The countries of Norway, Iceland, and all the northward, are cold and frozen, because they are farther from the power of the

[s] Fraxinus in sylvis pulcherrima, pinus in hortis; populus in fluviis, abies in montibus altis.—*Virgil.*

[a] Lord, if I had the skill and grace to be ever communing with my own heart, and with thee, I should never want either work or company; never have cause to complain of solitariness or tedious hours; for there is no time wherein there is not some main business to be done between thee and my soul. —*Bishop Hall*, soliloq. xiii. p. 45. Aristoteles dicit quod homo se ad divina et immortalia trahere debet quantum potest; unde in 11 de Animal. dicit, quod, quamvis parum sit quod de substantiis superioribus percipimus; tamen id modicum est magis amatum et desideratum omni cognitione quam de substantiis inferioribus habemus. Dicit etiam in 2do Cœli et Mundi, quod cum de corporibus cœlestibus questiones possunt solvi parva et topica solutione, contingit auditori ut vehemens sit gaudium ejus. Ex quibus omnibus apparet, quod de rebus nobilissimis quantumcunque imperfecta cognitio maximam perfectionem animæ confert.—*Aquin. cont. Gentiles*, lib. i. cap. 5.

sun; but in Egypt, Arabia, and the southern parts, it is far otherwise, where they live more near its powerful rays. What could make such frozen, uncomfortable Christians, but living so far as they do from heaven? And what makes some few others so warm in comforts, but their living higher than others do, and their frequent access so near to God? When the sun in the spring draws near our part of the earth, how do all things congratulate its approach! The earth looks green, and casteth off her mourning habit: the trees shoot forth; the plants revive; the pretty birds, how sweetly do they sing! the face of all things smiles upon us, and all the creatures below rejoice. Beloved friends, if we would but try this life with God, and would but keep these hearts above, what a spring of joy would be within us; and all our graces be fresh and green! How would the face of our souls be changed; and all that is within us rejoice! How should we forget our winter sorrows; and withdraw our souls from our sad retirements! How early should we rise (as those birds in the spring) to sing the praise of our great Creator! O Christian, get above: believe it, that region is warmer than this below. Those that have been there, have found it so, and those that have come thence have told us so: and I doubt not but that thou hast sometime tried it thyself. I dare appeal to thy own experience, or to the experience of any soul that knows what the true joys of a Christian are: when is it that you have largest comforts? Is it not after such an exercise as this, when thou hast got up thy heart, and conversed with God, and talked with the inhabitants of the higher world, and viewed the mansions of the saints and angels, and filled thy soul with the forethoughts of glory? If thou know by experience what this practice is, I dare say thou knowest what spiritual joy is. David professeth that the light of God's countenance would make his heart more glad than theirs that have corn, and wine, and oil. "Thou shalt fill me full of joy with thy countenance." (Psal. iv. 6, 7; and Acts ii. 28, out of Psal. xvi.) If it be the countenance of God that fills us with joy, then surely they that draw nearest, and most behold it, must needs be fullest of these joys. Sirs, if you never tried this art, nor lived this life of heavenly contemplation, I never wonder that you walk uncomfortably, that you are all complaining, and live in sorrows, and know not what the joy of the saints means. Can you have comforts from God, and never think of him? Can heaven rejoice you, when you do not remember it? Doth any thing in the world glad you,

when you think not on it? Must not every thing first enter your judgment and consideration, before it can delight your heart and affection? If you were possessed of all the treasures of the earth; if you had title to the highest dignities and dominions, and never think on it; surely it would never rejoice you.[b] Whom should we blame then, that we are so void of consolation, but our own negligent, unskilful hearts? God hath provided us a crown of glory, and promised to set it shortly on our heads, and we will not so much as think of it: he holdeth it out in the Gospel to us, and biddeth us behold and rejoice; and we will not so much as look at it; and yet we complain for want of comfort. What a perverse course is this, both against God and our own joys! I confess, though in fleshly things, the presenting of a comforting object is sufficient to produce an answerable delight, yet in spirituals we are more disabled. God must give the joy itself, as well as afford us matter for joy: but yet withal, it must be remembered, that God doth work upon us as men, and in a rational way doth raise our comforts: he enableth and exciteth us to mind and study these delightful objects, and from thence to gather our own comforts, as the bee doth gather her honey from the flowers; therefore he that is most skilful and painful in this gathering art, is usually the fullest of this spiritual sweetness. Where is the man that can tell me from experience, that he hath solid and usual joy in any other way but this, and that God worketh it immediately on his affections, without the means of his understanding and considering?[c] It is by believing that we are filled with joy and peace; (Rom. xv. 13:) and no longer than we continue our believing. It is in hope that the saints rejoice, yea, in this hope of the glory of God, (Rom. v. 2,) and no longer than they continue hoping. And here let me

[b] If there be delight in God in letting out himself to the saints, in reason there must needs be delight in the saints in letting out themselves into God, in flowing into God. The delight that the saints have in communicating themselves unto Christ is unutterable. Take this note, The more fully you lay out yourselves for Christ, the more comfort you shall have of your lives.—*Burroughs on Hos.* ii. 19. lect. xvii. pp. 605, 606.

[c] 1 Pet. i. 8. Cum contemplator inflammatus desiderio fœlicitatis, totam suam ponit conversationem in cœlestibus; cum ad cœlestia toto nisu aspirat, ex calore charitatis cor delitatur; et testimonio conscientiæ adesse sentitur, et spiritualiter videtur oculo animæ, qui est intellectus; ubi enim ardenter desideratur, adest; et ibi mansionem facit et in sanctas illas animas se transfert. Oritur ex hac dulci visitatione (qua sicut fulgor momentaneus adesse se ostendit) mentis sublevatio, et inter brachia amati incipit aliquantulum consopiri, ut non solum delectabiliter, sed tenaciter illi adhæreat; ut quasi vi quadam ab omnium visibilium, sensu et memoria abstrahatur, et pene suimet obliviscatur.—*Card. Cusan.* vol. ii. exercitat. lib. iv. fol. 68.

warn you of a dangerous snare, an opinion which will rob you of all your comfort: some think, if they should thus fetch in their comfort by believing and hoping, and work it out of Scripture promises, and extract it by their own thinking and studying, that then it would be a comfort only of their own hammering out, (as they say,) and not the genuine joy of the Holy Ghost. A desperate mistake, raised upon a ground that would overthrow almost all duty, as well as this, which is their setting the workings of God's Spirit and their own spirits in opposition, when their spirits must stand in subordination to God's: they are conjunct causes, co-operating to the producing of one and the same effect. God's Spirit worketh our comforts, by setting our own spirits a-work opon the promises, and raising our thoughts to the place of our comforts. As you would delight a covetous man by showing him gold, or a voluptuous man with fleshly delights; so God useth to delight his people, by taking them, as it were, by the hand, and leading them into heaven, and showing them himself, and their rest with him. God useth not to cast in our joys while we are idle, or taken up with other things. It is true, he sometime doth it suddenly, but yet usually in the aforesaid order, leading it into our hearts by our judgment and thoughts: and his sometime sudden extraordinary casting of comforting thoughts in our hearts, should be so far from hindering endeavours in a meditating way, that it should be a singular motive to quicken us to it; even as a taste given us of some cordial or choicer food, will make us desire and seek the rest. God feedeth not saints as birds do their young, bringing it to them, and putting it into their mouths, while they lie still in the nest, and only gape to receive it. But as he giveth to man the fruits of the earth, the increase of their land in corn and wine, while we plough, and sow, and weed, and water, and dung, and dress, and then with patience expect his blessing; so doth he give the joys of the soul. Yet I deny not, that if any should so think to work out his own comforts by meditation, as to attempt the work in his own strength, and not do all in subordination to God, nor perceive a necessity of the Spirit's assistance, the work would prove to be like the workman, and the comfort he would gather would be like both: even mere vanity: even as the husbandman's labour without the sun, and rain, and blessing of God.

So then you may easily see, that close meditation on the matter and cause of our joy, is God's way to procure solid joy. For

my part, if I should find my joy of another kind, I should be very prone to doubt of its sincerity. If I find a great deal of comfort in my heart, and know not how it came thither, nor upon what rational ground it was raised, nor what considerations do feed and continue it, I should be ready to question, How I know whether this be from God? And though, as the cup in Benjamin's sack, it might come from love, yet it would leave me but in fears and amazements, because of uncertainty. As I think, our love to God should not be like that of fond lovers, who love violently, but they know not why; so I think a Christian's joy should be grounded, rational joy, and not to rejoice, and know not why. Though perhaps in some extraordinary case, God may cast in such an extraordinary kind of joy, yet I think it is not his usual way. And if you observe the spirit of most forlorn, uncomfortable, despairing Christians, you shall find the reason to be, their ungrounded expectation of such unusual kind of joys; and accordingly are their spirits variously tossed, and most unconstantly tempered: sometime, when they meet with such joys, (or at least think so,) then they are cheerful and lifted up: but because these are usually short-lived joys, therefore they are straight as low as hell; and ordinarily that is their more lasting temper. And thus they are tossed as a vessel at sea, up and down, but still in extremes;[d] whereas, alas! God is most constant, Christ the same, heaven the same, and the promise the same: and if we took the right course for fetching in our comfort from these, surely our comforts should be more settled and constant, though not always the same. Whoever thou art, therefore, that readest these lines, I entreat thee in the name of the Lord, and as thou valuest the life of constant joy, and that good conscience which is a continual feast, that thou wouldst but seriously set upon this work, and learn the art of heavenly-mindedness, and thou shalt find the increase a hundredfold, and the benefit abundantly exceed thy labour. But this is the misery of man's nature: though every man naturally abhorreth sorrow, and loves the most merry and joyful life; yet few do love the way to joy, or will endure the pains by which it is obtained; they will take the next that comes to hand, and content themselves with earthly pleasures, rather than they will ascend to heaven to seek it; and yet when all is done, they must have it there, or be without it.

[d] Jam jam tacturos sydera summa putes; jam jam tacturos tartara nigra putes.—*Ovid.*

Sect. VI. 4. Consider, A heart in heaven will be a most excellent preservative against temptations, a powerful means to kill thy corruptions, and to save thy conscience from the wounds of sin. God can prevent our sinning, though we be careless; and keep off the temptation which we would draw upon ourselves, and sometimes doth so, but this is not his usual course, nor is this our safest way to escape. When the mind is either idle, or ill employed, the devil needs not a greater advantage: when he finds the thoughts let out on lust, revenge, ambition, or deceit, what an opportunity hath he to move for execution, and to put on the sinner to practise what he thinks on! Nay, if he find but the mind empty, there is room for any thing that he will bring in: but when he finds the heart in heaven, what hope that any of these motions should take? Let him entice to any forbidden course, or show us the bait of any pleasure, the soul will return Nehemiah's answer, "I am doing a great work, and cannot come." (Neh. vi. 3.) Several ways will this preserve us against temptation, First, By keeping the heart employed; Secondly, By clearing the understanding, and so confirming the will: Thirdly, By prepossessing the affections with the highest delights: Fourthly, And by keeping us in the way of God's blessing.

First, By keeping the heart employed: when we are idle, we tempt the devil to tempt us; as it is an encouragement to a thief, to see your doors open, and nobody within; and as we use to say, 'Careless persons make thieves:' so it will encourage Satan, to find your hearts idle; but when the heart is taken up with God, it cannot have while to hearken to temptations; it cannot have while to be lustful and wanton, ambitious or worldly: if a poor man have a suit to any of you, he will not come when you are taken up in some great man's company or discourse; that is but an ill time to speed.

If you were but busied in your lawful callings, you would not be so ready to hearken to temptations; much less if you were busied above with God: will you leave your plough and harvest in the field, or leave the quenching of a fire in your houses, to run with children a hunting of butterflies? would a judge be persuaded to rise from the bench, when he is sitting upon life and death, to go and play among the boys in the streets? No more will a Christian, when he is busy with God, and taking a survey of his eternal rest, give ear to the alluring charms of Satan. *Non vacat exiguis*, &c., is a character of the truly prudent man;

the children of that kingdom should never have while for trifles, but especially when they are employed in the affairs of the kingdom; and this employment is one of the saints' chief preservatives against temptation. For, as Gregory saith, "Nunquam Dei amor otiosus est: operatur enim magna, si est: si vero operari renuit, non est amor;" The love of God is never idle; it worketh great things when it truly is; and when it will not work, it is not love. Therefore, being still thus working, it is still preserving.

Secondly, A heavenly mind is freest from sin, because it is of clearest understanding in spiritual matters of greatest concernment. A man that is much in conversing above, hath truer and livelier apprehensions of things concerning God and his soul, than any reading or learning can beget: though, perhaps, he may be ignorant in divers controversies and matters that less concern salvation; yet those truths which must establish his soul, and preserve him from temptation, he knows far better than the greatest scholars; he hath so deep an insight into the evil of sin, the vanity of the creature, the brutishness of fleshly, sensual delights, that temptations have little power on him; for these earthly vanities are Satan's baits, which, though they may take much with the undiscerning world, yet, with the clear-sighted, they have lost their force. "In vain," saith Solomon, "the net is spread in the sight of any bird." (Prov. i. 17.) And usually in vain doth Satan lay his snares to entrap the soul that plainly sees them. When a man is on high, he may see the farther: we use to set our discovering sentinels on the highest place that is near unto us, that they may discern all the motions of the enemy. In vain doth the enemy lay his ambuscados when we stand over him on some high mountain, and clearly discover all he doth: when the heavenly mind is above with God, he may far easier from thence discern every danger that lies below, and the whole method of the devil in deceiving; nay, if he did not discover the snare, yet were he more likely far to escape it than any others that converse below. A net or bait that is laid on the ground, is unlikely to catch the bird that flies in the air; while she keeps above, she is out of danger, and the higher the safer; so it is with us. Satan's temptations are laid on the earth, earth is the place, and earth is the ordinary bait: how shall these ensnare the Christian who hath left the earth, and walks with God? But, alas! we keep not long so high, but down we must to the earth again, and then we are taken.

If conversing with wise and learned men is the way to make one wise and learned, then no wonder if he that converseth with God, become wise.[c] If men that travel about the earth, do think to return home with more experience and wisdom, how much more he that travels to heaven! As the very air and climate that we most abide in, do work our bodies to their own temper, no wonder if he that is much in that sublime and purer region, have a purer soul and quicker sight, and if he have an understanding full of light, who liveth with the Sun, the Fountain, the Father of light; as certain herbs and meats we feed on, do tend to make our sight more clear, so the soul that is fed with angels' food, must needs have an understanding much more clear, than they that dwell and feed on earth. And, therefore, you may easily see that such a man is in far less danger of temptation, and Satan will hardlier beguile his soul, even as a wise man is hardlier deceived than fools and children. Alas! the men of the world that dwell below, and know no other conversation but earthly, no wonder if their understandings be darkened, and they be easily drawn to every wickedness; no wonder if Satan take them captive at his will, (2 Tim. ii. 26,) and lead them about, as we see a dog lead a blind man with a string. The foggy air and mists of earth do thicken their sight; the smoke of worldly care and business blinds them, and the dungeon which they live in, is a land of darkness. How can worms and moles see, whose dwelling is always in the earth? While this dust is in men's eyes, no wonder if they mistake gain for godliness, sin for grace, the world for God, their own wills for the law of Christ, and in the issue, hell for heaven. If the people of God will but take notice of their own hearts, they shall find their experiences confirming this that I have said. Christians, do you not sensibly perceive, that when your hearts are seriously fixed on heaven, you presently become wiser than before? Are not your understandings more solid, and your thoughts more sober? Have you not truer apprehensions of things than you had? For my own part, if ever I be wise, it is when I have been much above, and seriously studied the life to come. Methinks I find my understanding after such contemplations, as much to differ from what it was before, as I before differed from a fool or idiot. When my understanding is weakened, and befooled with common employment, and with con-

[c] Itali habent proverbium hoc, Qui Venetias non vidit, non credit: et qui aliquando ibi non vixit, non intelligit. Quod de vita hac cœlesti verissimum.

versing long with the vanities below, methinks a few sober thoughts of my Father's house, and the blessed provision of his family in heaven, doth make me, with the prodigal, to come to myself again. Surely, when a Christian withdraws himself from his earthly thoughts, and begins to converse with God in heaven, he is as Nebuchadnezzar, taken from the beasts of the field to the throne, and his understanding returneth to him again. Oh, when a Christian hath had but a glimpse of eternity, and then looks down on the world again, how doth he befool himself for his sin; for neglects of Christ; for his fleshly pleasures; for his earthly cares! How doth he say to his laughter, 'Thou art mad!' and to his vain mirth, 'What dost thou?' How could he even tear his very flesh, and take revenge on himself for his folly! How verily doth he think there is no man in Bedlam so truly mad as wilful sinners and lazy betrayers of their own souls, and unworthy slighters of Christ and glory!

This is it that makes a dying man to be usually wiser than other men are, because he looks on eternity as near, and knowing he must very shortly be there, he hath more deep and heart-piercing thoughts of it than ever he could have in health and prosperity. Therefore it is that the most deluded sinners that were cheated with the world, and bewitched with sin, do then most ordinarily come to themselves, so far as to have a righter judgment than they had; and that many of the most bitter enemies of the saints would give a world to be such themselves, and would fain die in the condition of those whom they hated; even as wicked Balaam, when his eyes are opened to see the perpetual blessedness of the saints, will cry out, "Oh! that I might die the death of the righteous, and that my last end might be like his." As witches when they are taken, and in prison, or at the gallows, have no power left them to bewitch any more, so we see commonly the most ungodly men, when they see they must die, and go to another world, their judgments are so changed, and their speech so changed, as if they were not the same men, as if they were come to their wits again, and sin and Satan had power to bewitch them no more. Yet let the same men recover, and lose their apprehension of the life to come, and how quickly do they lose their understandings with it! In a word, those that were befooled with the world and the flesh, are far wiser when they come to die; and those that were wise before, are now wise indeed. If you would take a man's judgment about sin, or grace, or Christ, or heaven, go to a dying

man, and ask him which you were best to choose? Ask him whether you were best be drunk or no; or be lustful, or proud, or revengeful, or no? Ask him whether you were best pray, and instruct your families, or no; or to sanctify the Lord's-day, or no? though some to the death may be desperately hardened, yet, for the most part, I had rather take a man's judgment then, about these things, than at any other time. For my own part, if my judgment be ever solid, it is when I have the most serious apprehensions of the life to come; nay, the sober mention of death sometimes will a little compose the most distracted understanding. Sirs, do you not think, except men are stark devils, but that it would be a harder matter to entice a man to sin when he lies a dying, than it was before? If the devil, or his instruments, should then tell him of a cup of sack, of merry company, of a stage-play, or morris-dance, do you think he would then be so taken with the motion? If he should then tell him of riches, or honours, or show him a pair of cards, or dice, or a whore, would the temptation, think you, be as strong as before? Would he not answer, Alas! what is all this to me, who must presently appear before God, and give account of all my life, and straightways be in another world! Why, Christian, if the apprehension of the nearness of eternity will work such strange effects upon the ungodly, and make them wiser than to be deceived so easily as they were wont to be in time of health, oh! then, what rare effects would it work with thee, and make thee scorn the baits of sin, if thou couldst always dwell in the views of God, and in lively thoughts of thine everlasting state! Surely, a believer, if he improve his faith, may ordinarily have truer and more quickening apprehensions of the life to come, in the time of his health, than an unbeliever hath at the hour of his death.

Thirdly, Furthermore, a heavenly mind is exceedingly fortified against temptations, because the affections are so thoroughly prepossessed with the high delights of another world. Whether Satan do not usually by the sensitive appetite prevail with the will, without any further prevailing with the reason, than merely to suspend it, I will not now dispute; but, doubtless, when the soul is not affected with good, though the understanding do never so clearly apprehend the truth, it is easy for Satan to entice that soul. Mere speculations, be they never so true, which sink not into the affections, are poor preservatives against temptations. He that loves most, and not only he that knows most,

will easiest resist the motions of sin. There is in a Christian a kind of spiritual taste whereby he knows these things, besides his mere discursive reasoning power: the will doth as sweetly relish goodness, as the understanding doth truth, and here lies much of a Christian's strength. If you should dispute with a simple man, and labour to persuade him that sugar is not sweet, or that wormwood is not bitter, perhaps you might by sophistry over-argue his mere reason, but yet you could not persuade him against his sense; whereas, a man that hath lost his taste, is easier deceived for all his reason. So is it here; when thou hast had a fresh delightful taste of heaven, thou wilt not be so easily persuaded from it; you cannot persuade a very child to part with his apple while the taste of its sweetness is yet in his mouth. O that you would be persuaded to try this course, to be much in feeding on the hidden manna, and to be frequently tasting the delights of heaven. It is true, it is a great way off from our sense, but faith can reach as far as that. How would this raise thy resolutions, and make thee laugh at the fooleries of the world, and scorn to be cheated with such childish toys! Reader, I pray thee tell me in good sadness, dost thou think, if the devil had set upon Peter in the mount, when he saw Christ in his transfiguration, and Moses and Elias talking with him, would he so easily have been drawn to deny his Lord? What! with all that glory in his eye? No, the devil took a greater advantage, when he had him in the high priest's hall, in the midst of danger and evil company, when he had forgotten the sight of the mount, and then he prevails; so if he should set upon a believing soul, when he is taken up in the mount with Christ, what would such a soul say? 'Get thee behind me, Satan; wouldst thou persuade me from hence with trifling pleasures, and steal my heart from this my rest; wouldst thou have me sell these joys for nothing? Is there any honour or delight like this; or can that be profit which loseth me this?' Some such answer would the soul return. But, alas! Satan stays till we are come down, and the taste of heaven is out of our mouths, and the glory we saw is even forgotten, and then he easily deceives our hearts. What! if the devil had set upon Paul, when he was in the third heaven, and seeing those unutterable things, could he then, do you think, have persuaded his heart to the pleasures, or profits, or honours of the world? If his prick in the flesh, which he after received, were not affliction, but temptation, surely it prevailed not, but sent him to

heaven again for preserving grace. Though the Israelites below may be enticed to idolatry, and from eating and drinking to rise up to play, yet Moses in the mount with God will not do so; and, if they had been where he was, and had but seen what he there saw, perhaps they would not so easily have sinned. If he give a man aloes after honey, or some loathsome thing when he hath been feeding on junkets, will he not soon perceive, and spit it out? Oh, if we could keep the taste of our soul continually delighted with the sweets above, with what disdain should we spit out the baits of sin!

Fourthly, Besides, whilst the heart is set on heaven, a man is under God's protection; and therefore, if Satan then assault him, God is more engaged for his defence, and will doubtless stand by us, and say, 'My grace is sufficient for thee:' when a man is in the way of God's blessing, he is in the less danger of sin's enticings.

So that now, upon all this, let me entreat thee, christian reader, if thou be a man that is haunted with temptation, (as doubtless thou art, if thou be a man,) if thou perceive thy danger, and wouldst fain escape it, O use much this powerful remedy; keep close with God by a heavenly mind; learn this art of diversion; and when the temptation comes, go straight to heaven, and turn thy thoughts to higher things; thou shalt find this a surer help than any other resisting whatsoever: as men will do with scolding women, let them alone and follow their business, as if they heard not what they said; and this will sooner put them to silence, than if they answered them word for word; so do by Satan's temptations; it may be he can over-talk you, and over-wit you in dispute, but let him alone, and study not his temptations, but follow your business above with Christ; and keep your thoughts to their heavenly employment, and you sooner will this way vanquish the temptation, than if you argued or talked it out with the tempter; not but that sometimes it is most convenient to over-reason him; but in ordinary temptations, you shall find it far better to follow this your work, and neglect the allurements, and say, as Gryneus (out of Chrysost.) when he sent back Pistorius's letters, not so much as opening the seal, "Inhonestum est honestam matronam cum meretrice litigare:" It is an unseemly thing for an honest matron to be scolding with a whore; so it is a dishonest thing for a son of God, in apparent cases, to stand wrangling with the devil, and to be so far at his beck as to

dispute with him at his pleasure, even as oft as he will be pleased to tempt us. Christian, if thou remember that of Solomon, (Prov. xv. 24,) thou hast the sum of what I intend, "The way of life is above to the wise, to avoid the path of hell beneath;" and withal remember Noah's example, "Noah was a just man, and perfect in his generation;" (Gen. vi. 9;) and no wonder, for Noah "walked with God." (Gen. xl. 40.) So I may say to thee, even as God to Abraham, "Walk before God, and thou wilt be upright." (Gen. xvii. 1.)

Sect. VII. 5. Consider, The diligent keeping of your hearts on heaven, will preserve the vigour of all your graces, and put life into all your duties.[f] It is the heavenly Christian, that is, the lively Christian. It is our strangeness to heaven that makes us so dull; it is the end that quickens to all the means: and the more frequently and clearly this end is beheld, the more vigorous will all our motion be. How doth it make men unweariedly labour, and fearlessly venture, when they do but think of the gainful prize! How will the soldier hazard his life, and the mariner pass through storms and waves; how cheerfully do they compass sea and land! And no difficulty can keep them back, when they think of an uncertain, perishing treasure. Oh, what life then would it put into a Christian's endeavours, if he would frequently forethink of his everlasting treasure! We run so slowly, and strive so lazily, because we so little mind the prize. When a Christian hath been tasting the hidden manna, and drinking of the streams of the paradise of God, what life doth this ambrosia and nectar put into him! How fervent will his spirit be in prayer, when he considers that he prays for no less than heaven! If Enoch, Elias, or any of the saints who are now in heaven, and have been partakers of the vision of the living God, should be sent down to the earth again to live on the terms as we now do, would they not strive hard, and pray earnestly, rather than lose that blessed rest? No wonder, for they would know what it is they pray for. It is true, we cannot know it here so thoroughly as they, yet if we would but get as high as we can, and study but that which may now be known, it would strangely alter both our spirits and our duties. Observe but the man who is much in heaven, and you shall see he is not like other Christians. There is somewhat of that which he hath seen above, appeareth in all his duty and conversation; nay, take but the same man immediately when he is returned from

[f] Non est vivere, sed valere vita; ut proverb.

these views of bliss, and you shall easily perceive that he excels himself, as if he were not, indeed, as before. If he be a preacher, how heavenly are his sermons; what clear descriptions; what high expressions; what savoury passages, hath he of that rest! If he be a private Christian, what heavenly conference; what heavenly prayers; what a heavenly carriage hath he! May you not even hear in a preacher's sermons, or in the private duties of another, when they have been most above? When Moses had been with God in the mount, he had derived so much glory from God that made his face to shine, that the people could not behold him. Beloved friends, if you but set upon this employment, even so would it be with you. Men would see the face of your conversation shine, and say, 'Surely, he hath been with God.' As the body is apt to be changed into the temper of the air it breathes in, and the food it lives on, so will your spirits receive an alteration according to the objects which they are exercised about. If your thoughts do feed on Christ and heaven, you will be heavenly; if they feed on earth, you will be earthly. It is true, a heavenly nature goes before this heavenly employment; but yet the work will make it more heavenly. There must be life before we can feed; but our life is continued and increased by feeding: therefore, reader, let me here inform thee, that if thou lie complaining of deadness and dulness, that thou canst not love Christ, nor rejoice in his love; that thou hast no life in prayer, nor any other duty, and yet never tried this quickening course, or at least art careless and inconstant in it. Why, thou art the cause of thy own complaints; thou deadest and dullest thine own heart; thou deniest thyself that life which thou talkest of. Is not thy "life hid with Christ in God?" (Col. iii. 3.) Whither must thou go but to Christ for it? and whither is that but to heaven, where he is? Thou wilt not come to Christ, that thou mayest have Christ. (John v. 42.) If thou wouldst have light and heat, why art thou then no more in the sunshine? If thou wouldst have more of that grace which flows from Christ, why art thou no more with Christ for it? Thy strength is in heaven, and thy life in heaven, and there thou must daily fetch it if thou wilt have it. For want of this recourse to heaven, thy soul is as a candle that is not lighted, and thy duties as a sacrifice which hath no fire. Fetch one coal daily from this altar, and see if thy offering will not burn. Light thy candle at this flame, and feed it daily with oil from hence, and see if it will not

gloriously shine; keep close to this reviving fire, and see if thy affections will not be warm. Thou bewailest thy want of love to God, and well thou mayest, for it is a heinous crime, a killing sin; why, lift up thy eye of faith to heaven, behold his beauty, contemplate his excellences, and see whether his amiableness will not fire thy affections, and his perfect goodness ravish thy heart. As the eye doth incense the sensual affections by its over-much gazing on alluring objects, so doth the eye of our faith in meditation inflame our affections towards our Lord, by the frequent gazing on that highest beauty. Whoever thou art, that art a stranger to this employment, be thy parts and profession ever so great, let me tell thee, thou spendest thy life but in trifling or idleness; thou seemest to live, but thou art dead. I may say of thee, as Seneca of idle Vacia, "Scis latere, vivere nescis," Thou knowest how to lurk in idleness, but how to live thou knowest not; and as the same Seneca would say, when he passed by that sluggard's dwelling, "Ibi situs est Vacia;" so it may be said of thee, There lies such an one, but not there lives such an one; for thou spendest thy days liker to the dead than the living. One of Draco's laws to the Athenians was, that he who was convict of idleness should be put to death.[s] Thou dost execute this on thy own soul, whilst by thy idleness thou destroyest its liveliness.

Thou mayst many other ways exercise thy parts, but this is the way to exercise thy graces. They all come from God as their fountain, and lead to God as their ultimate end; and are exercised on God as their chiefest object, so that God is their all in all. From heaven they come, and heavenly their nature is, and to heaven they will direct and move thee. And as exercise maintaineth appetite, strength, and liveliness, to the body, so doth it also to the soul. "Use limbs, and have limbs," is the known proverb; and use grace and spiritual life in these heavenly exercises, and you shall find it quickly cause their increase. The exercise of your mere abilities of speech will not much advantage your graces, but the exercise of these heavenly soul-exalting gifts will inconceivably help to the growth of both. For as the moon is then most full and glorious when it doth most directly face the sun, so will your souls be both in gifts and

[s] De animo hoc cœlesti dico ut Rabinus ille de operibus.: Doctrina sine opere non est doctrina: cadit enim super corda, sicut imber super saxa. Et ut Chrysost.: Nihil frigidius est doctore verbis solummodo philosophante: hoc enim non est doctoris sed histrionis.

graces when you do most nearly view the face of God. This will feed your tongue with matter, and make you abound and overflow, both in preaching, praying, and conferring: besides, the fire which you fetch from heaven for your sacrifices, is no false or strange fire, as your liveliness will be much more, so will it be also more sincere. A man may have a great deal of fervour in affections and duties, and all prove but common and unsound when it is raised upon common grounds and motives: your zeal will partake of the nature of those things by which it is acted; the zeal therefore which is kindled by your meditations on heaven, is most likely to prove a heavenly zeal; and the liveliness of the spirit, which you fetch from the face of God, must needs be the divinest, sincerest life. Some men's fervency is drawn only from their books, and some from the pricks of some stinging affliction, and some from the mouth of a moving minister, and some from the encouragement of an attentive auditory; but he that knows this way to heaven, and derives it daily from the pure fountain, shall have his soul revived with the water of life, and enjoy that quickening which is the saint's peculiar. By this faith thou mayest offer Abel's sacrifice, more excellent than that of common men, and by it obtain witness that thou art righteous, God testifying of thy gifts that they are sincere, (Heb. xi. 4,) when others are ready, as Baal's priests, to beat themselves, and cut their flesh, because their sacrifice will not burn; then if thou canst get but the spirit of Elias, and in the chariot of contemplation canst soar aloft, till thou approachest near to the quickening Spirit, thy soul and sacrifice will gloriously flame, though the flesh and the world should cast upon them the water of all their opposing enmity. Say not now, 'How shall we get so high, or how can mortals ascend to heaven?' For faith hath wings, and meditation is its chariot; its office is to make absent things as present. Do you not see how a little piece of glass, if it do but rightly face the sun, will so contract its beams and heat as to set on fire that which is behind it, which without it would have received but little warmth? Why, thy faith is as the burning-glass to thy sacrifice, and meditation sets it to face the sun; only take it not away too soon, but hold it there awhile, and thy soul will feel the happy effect. The slanderous Jews did raise a foolish tale of Christ, that he got into the holy of holies, and thence stole the true name of God; and lest he should lose it, cut a hole in his thigh, and sewed it therein, and by virtue of this he raised

the dead, gave sight to the blind, cast out devils, and performed all his miracles. Surely, if we can get into the holy of holies, and bring thence the name and image of God, and get it closed up in our hearts, this would enable us to work wonders; every duty we performed would be a wonder, and they that heard would be ready to say, 'Never man spake as this man speaketh.' The Spirit would possess us, as those flaming tongues, and make us every one to speak, not in the variety of the confounded languages, but in the primitive, pure language of Canaan, the wonderful works of God. We should then be in every duty, whether prayer, exhortation, or brotherly reproof, as Paul was at Athens, his spirit (παρωξύνετο) was stirred within him, (Acts xvii. 16,) and should be ready to say, as Jeremy did, "His word was in my heart, as a burning fire shut up in my bones; and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay." (Jer. xx. 9.)

Christian reader, art thou not thinking when thou seest a lively believer, and hearest his soul-melting prayers, and soul-ravishing discourse, Oh, how happy a man is this! Oh, that my soul were in this blessed plight! Why, I here direct and advise thee from God: try this fore-mentioned course, and set thy soul conscionably to this work, and thou shalt be in as good a case. Wash thee frequently in this Jordan, and thy leprous, dead soul will revive, and thou shalt know that there is a God in Israel, and that thou mayst live a vigorous and joyous life, if thou wilfully cast not by this duty, and so neglect thine own mercies. If thou be not a lazy, reserved hypocrite, but most truly value this strong and active frame of spirit, show it then by thy present attempting this heavenly exercise. Say not now, but thou hast heard the way to obtain this life into thy soul, and into thy duties. If thou wilt yet neglect it, blame thyself. But, alas! the multitude of professors come to a minister just as Naaman came to Elias; they ask us, 'How shall I know I am a child of God? How shall I overcome a hard heart, and get such strength, and life of grace?' But they expect that some easy means should do it; and think we should cure them with the very answer to their question, and teach them a way to be quickly well; but when they hear of a daily trading in heaven, and the constant meditations on the joys above; this is a greater task than they expected, and they turn their backs as Naaman to Elias, or the young man on Christ, and few of the most conscionable will set upon the duty. Will not preaching,

and praying, and conference, serve, say they, without this dwelling still in heaven? Just as country people come to physicians; when they have opened their case, and made their moan, they look he should cure them in a day or two, or with the use of some cheap and easy simple; but when they hear of a tedious method of physic, and of costly compositions, and bitter potions, they will hazard their lives with some sottish empiric, who tells them an easier and cheaper way; yea, or venture on death itself before they will obey such difficult counsel. Too many that we hope well of, I fear, will take this course here. If we could give them life, as God did, with a word, or could heal their souls, as charmers do their bodies, with easy stroking, and a few good words, then they would readily hear and obey. I entreat thee, reader, beware of this folly: fall to the work; the comfort of spiritual health will countervail all the trouble of the duty. It is but the flesh that repines and gainsays, which thou knowest was never a friend to thy soul. If God had set thee on some grievous work, shouldst thou not have done it for the life of thy soul? How much more when he doth but invite thee heavenward to himself!

Sect. VIII. 6. Consider, The frequent believing views of glory are the most precious cordial in all afflictions. First, To sustain our spirits, and make our sufferings far more easy. Secondly, To stay us from repining, and make us bear with patience and joy: and, Thirdly, To strengthen our resolutions, that we forsake not Christ for fear of trouble. Our very beast will carry us more cheerfully in travel, when he is coming homeward, where he expecteth rest. A man will more quietly endure the lancing of his sores, the cutting out the stone, when he thinks on the ease that will afterwards follow. What, then, will not a believer endure, when he thinks of the rest to which it tendeth? What, if the way be never so rough, can it be tedious if it lead to heaven! Oh! sweet sickness,[h] sweet reproaches, imprisonments, or death, which is accompanied with these tastes of our future

[h] Contumeliis, quæ vulgo tales habentur, nimio otio ingenia nostra infirma et muliebria, et inopia veræ injuriæ lascivientia commoventur. Venit tandem mors φαρμακευτικὴ κἀδαφοις omnium malorum, quæ omnes pares facit, et victo victorique finem æque maturum affert.—*Chytræus.* Read Tertullian, Cyprian, &c., when it was ordinary to die for Christ; and see what other argument they so much encourage with, as this certain crown of glory. Nos non annectimus arescentem coronam; sed à Deo æternis floribus vividam sustinemus: qui et modeste Dei nostri liberalitate securi, spe futuræ fœlicitatis, fide præsentis ejus majestatis animamur; sic et beate resurgimus et futuri contemplatione jam vivimus.—*Minut. Felix, Octav.* p. 401.

rest. This doth keep the suffering from the soul, so that it can work upon no more but our fleshly outside, even as alexipharmical medicines preserve the heart, that the contagion reach not the vital spirits. Surely, our sufferings trouble not the mind, according to the degrees of bodily pain, but as the soul is more or less fortified with this preserving antidote. Believe it, reader, thou wilt have a doleful sickness, thou wilt suffer heavily, thou wilt die most sadly, if thou have not at hand the foretastes of rest. For my own part, if thou regard the experience of one that hath often tried, had it not been for that little (alas! too little) taste which I had of rest, my sufferings would have been grievous, and death more terrible. I may say, as David, "I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living." (Psalm xxvii. 13.) And, as the same David, "I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me: no man cared for my soul. I cried unto thee, O Lord, and said, Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living." (Psalm cxlii. 4, 5.) I may say of the promise of this rest, as David said of God's law, "Unless this had been my delight, I had perished in mine affliction." (Psalm cxix. 92.) "One thing," saith he, "I have desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple: for in time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion; in the secret of his tabernacle he shall hide me; he shall set me upon a rock. And then shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me; therefore shall I offer in that his tabernacle sacrifices of joy, and sing, yea, sing praises unto the Lord." (Psalm xxvii. 4—6.) Therefore as thou wilt then be ready, with David, to pray, "Be not far from me, for trouble is near." (Psalm xxii. 11.) So let it be thy own chiefest care not to be far from God and heaven, when trouble is near, and thou wilt then find him to be unto thee a very present help in trouble. (Psal. xliv.) Then, though the fig-tree should not blossom, neither should fruit be in the vines, the labour of the olive should fail, and the fields should yield no meat, the flock should be cut off from the fold, and there were no herd in the stalls; yet thou mightest rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of thy salvation. (Hab. iii. 17, 18.) All sufferings are nothing to us, so far as we have the foresight of this salvation. No bolts, nor bars, nor distance of place, can

shut out these supporting joys, because they cannot confine our faith and thoughts, although they may confine our flesh. Christ and faith are both spiritual, and therefore prisons and banishments cannot hinder their intercourse.[1] Even when persecution and fear hath shut the doors, Christ can come in, and stand in the midst, and say to his disciples, "Peace be unto you." And Paul and Silas can be in heaven, even when they are locked up in the inner prison, and their bodies scourged, and their feet in the stocks. No wonder if there be more mirth in their stocks than on Herod's throne, for there was more of Christ and heaven. The martyrs find more rest in the flames than their persecutors can in their pomp and tyranny, because they foresee the flames they escape, and the rest which that fiery chariot is conveying them to. It is not the place that gives the rest, but the presence and beholding of Christ in it. If the Son of God will walk with us in it, we may walk safely in the midst of those flames which shall devour those that cast us in. (Dan. iii.) Why, then, Christian, keep thy soul above with Christ: be as little as may be out of his company, and then all conditions will be alike unto thee. For that is the best estate to thee, in which thou possessest most of him. The moral arguments of a heathen philosopher may make the burden somewhat lighter, but nothing can make us soundly joy in tribulation, except we can fetch our joy from heaven. How came Abraham to leave his country, and follow God he knew not whither? Why, because "he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." (Heb. xi. 8—10.) What made Moses choose affliction with the people of God, rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, and to esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt? Why, because he had respect to the recompense of reward. (Heb. xi. 24—26.) What made him to forsake Egypt, and not to fear the wrath of the king? Why, he endured, as seeing him who is invisible. (Ver. 27.) How did they quench the violence of fire; and out

[1] Cum revocatio illa venerit, cum claritas super nos fulserit, tam beati erimus et læti dignatione Domini honorati, quam rei remanebunt et miseri qui Dei desertores, et contra Deum rebellis voluntatem fecerunt diaboli. Hæc fratres, hæreant cordibus vestris: hæc sit armorum vestrorum præparatio: hæc diurna ac nocturna meditatio; ante oculos habere et cogitatione semper ac sensibus volvere iniquorum supplicia, et præmia ac merita justorum. Si hæc meditantibus nobis supervenit persecutionis dies, miles Christi non expavescit ad pugnam, sed paratus est ad coronam.—*Cyprian*, epist. lvi. p. 156.

of weakness were made strong? Why would they not accept deliverance when they were tortured?[k] Why, they had their eye on a better resurrection which they might obtain. Yea, it is most evident that our Lord himself did fetch his encouragement to sufferings from the foresight of his glory; for, to this end, he both died and rose, and revived, that he might be the Lord both of the dead and living. (Rom. xiv. 9.) "Even Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right-hand of the throne of God." (Heb. xii. 2.) Who can wonder that pain and sorrow, poverty and sickness, should be exceeding grievous to that man who cannot reach to see the end? Or that death should be the king of terrors to him who cannot see the life beyond it? He that looks not on the end of his sufferings, as well as on the suffering itself, he needs must loose the whole consolation: and if he see not the quiet fruit of righteousness which it afterward yieldeth, it cannot to him be joyous, but grievous. (Heb. xii. 11.) This is the noble advantage of faith; it can look on the means and end together. This, also, is the reason why we oft pity ourselves more than God doth pity us, though we love not ourselves so much as he doth; and why we would have the cup to pass from us, when he will make us drink it up. We pity ourselves with an ignorant pity, and would be saved from the cross, which is the way to save us. God sees our glory as soon as our suffering, and sees our suffering as it conducteth to our glory. He sees our cross and our crown at once, and therefore pitieth us the less, and will not let us have our wills. Sirs, believe it, this is the great reason of our mistakes, impatience, and censuring of God, of our sadness of spirit at sickness and at death, because we gaze on the evil itself, but fix not our thoughts on what is beyond it. We look only on the blood, and ruin, and danger; but God sees these, with all the benefits to souls, bodies, church, state, and posterity, all with one single view. We see the ark taken by the Philistines, but we see not their god falling before it, and themselves returning it home with gifts. They that saw Christ only on the cross, or in the grave, do shake their heads, and think him lost: but God saw him dying, buried, rising, glorified, and all this with one view. Surely, faith will imitate God in this, so far as it hath the glass of a promise to help it. He that sees Joseph only in

[k] Omnia facile contemnere potest, qui se moriturum esse serio cogitat, inquit Chytræus.

the pit, or in the prison, will more lament his case, than he that sees his dignity beyond it. Could old Jacob have seen so far, it might have saved him a great deal of sorrow. He that sees no more than the burying of the corn under ground, or the threshing, the winnowing, and the grinding of it, will take both it and the labour for lost; but he that foresees its springing and increase, and its making bread for the life of man, will think otherwise. This is our mistake: we see God burying us under ground, but we foresee not the spring when we shall all revive: we feel him threshing and winnowing and grinding us, but we see not when we shall be served to our Master's table. If we should but clearly see heaven as the end of all God's dealings with us, surely none of his dealings could be so grievous. Think of this, I entreat thee, reader. If thou canst but learn this way to heaven, and get thy soul acquainted there, thou needest not be unfurnished of the choicest cordials to revive thy spirits in every affliction: thou knowest where to have them whenever thou wantest. Thou mayest have arguments at hand, to answer all that the devil or flesh can say to thy discomfort. Oh! if God would once raise us to this life, we should find that though heaven and sin are at a great distance, yet heaven and a prison, or remotest banishment; heaven and the belly of a whale in the sea; heaven and a den of lions; a consuming sickness, or invading death; are at no such distance. But as Abraham so far off saw Christ's day, and rejoiced, so we, in our most forlorn estate, might see that day when Christ shall give us rest, and therein rejoice.[1] I beseech thee, Christian, for the honour of the Gospel, and for the comfort of thy soul, that thou be not to learn this heavenly art, when in the greatest extremity thou hast most need to use it. I know thou expectest suffering days; at least, thou lookest to be sick and die. Thou wilt then have exceeding need of consolation. Why, whence dost thou think to draw thy comforts? If thou broach every other vessel, none will come. It is only heaven that can afford thee store. The place is far off: the well is deep; and if, then, thou have not wherewith to draw, nor got thy soul acquainted with the place, thou wilt find thyself at a fearful loss. It is not an easy nor a common thing, even with the best sort of men, to die with

[1] Nullus iis dolor est de incursatione malorum præsentium, quibus fiducia est futurorum bonorum. Nec consternamur adversis, nec frangimur, nec dolemus, neque in ulla aut rerum clade rebelles aut corporum valetudine musitamus, spiritu magis quam carne viventes, firmitate animi infirmitatem corporis vincimus.—*Cyprian ad Demetrian.* sect. lib. 15. ed. Goulart. p. 329.

joy. As ever thou wouldst shut up thy days in peace, and close thy dying eyes with comfort, die daily. Live now above, be much with Christ, and thy own soul and the saints about thee shall bless the day that ever thou tookest this counsel. When God shall call thee to a sick bed, and a grave, thou wilt perceive him saying to thee, "Come, my people, enter into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast." (Isa. xxvi. 20.) It is he that, with Stephen, doth see heaven opened, and Christ sitting at the right-hand of God, who will comfortably bear the storm of stones. (Acts vii. 56.) Thou knowest not yet what trials thou mayest be called to. The clouds begin to rise again, and the times to threaten us with fearful darkness: few ages so prosperous to the church, but that still we must be saved so as by fire, (1 Cor. ii. 15,) and go to heaven by the old road. Men that would fall if the storm should shake them, do frequently meet with that which tries them. Why, what wilt thou do if this should be thy case? Art thou fitted to suffer imprisonment, or banishment; to bear the loss of goods and life? How is it possible thou shouldst do all this, and do it cordially and cheerfully, except thou hast a taste of some greater good, which thou lookest to gain by losing these? Will the merchant throw his goods overboard till he sees he must otherwise lose his life? And wilt thou cast away all thou hast before thou hast felt the sweetness of that rest, which else thou must lose by saving these? Nay, and it is not a speculative knowledge, which thou hast got only by reading or hearing of heaven, which will make thee part with all to get it. As a man that only hears of the sweetness of pleasant food, or reads of the melodious sounds of music, this doth not much excite his desires; but when he hath tried the one by his taste, and the other by his ear, then he will more lay out to get them: so if thou shouldst know only by the hearing of the ear what is the glory of the inheritance of the saints, this would not bring thee through sufferings and death; but if thou take this trying, tasting course, by daily exercising thy soul above, then nothing will stand in thy way, but thou wouldst on till thou art there, though through fire and water. What state more terrible than that of an apostate, when God hath told us, if any man draw back, his soul shall have no pleasure in him; (Heb. x. 38;) because they take not their pleasure in God, and fill not themselves with the delights of his ways, and of his heavenly paths, which drop fatness: (Psal. lxv. 11:) therefore do they

prove backsliders in heart, and are filled with the bitterness of their own ways? (Prov. xiv. 14.)[m]

Nay, if they should not be brought to trial, and so not actually deny Christ, yet they are still interpretatively such, because they are such in disposition, and would be such in action, if they were put to it. I assure thee, reader, for my part, I cannot see how thou wilt be able to hold out to the end, if thou keep not thine eye upon the recompense of reward, and use not frequently to taste this cordially; for the less thy diligence is in this, the more doubtful must thy perseverance needs be; for the joy of the Lord is thy strength, and that joy must be fetched from the place of thy joy: and if thou walk without thy strength, how long dost thou think thou art like to endure?

Sect. IX. 7. Consider, It is he that hath his conversation in heaven, who is the profitable Christian to all about him: with him you may take sweet counsel, and go up to the celestial house of God. When a man is in a strange country, far from home, how glad is he of the company of one of his own nation! How delightful is it to them to talk of their country, of their acquaintance, and the affairs of their home; why, with a heavenly Christian thou mayest have such discourse: for he hath been there in the Spirit, and can tell thee of the glory and rest above. What pleasant discourse was it to Joseph to talk with his brethren in a strange land, and to inquire of his father, and his brother Benjamin? Is it not so to a Christian to talk with his brethren that have been above, and inquire after his Father, and Christ his Lord? When a worldling will talk of nothing but the world, and a politician of nothing but the affairs of the state, and a mere scholar of human learning, and a common professor of duties, and of Christians; the heavenly man will be speaking of heaven, and the strange glory which his faith hath seen, and our speedy and blessed meeting there. I confess, to discourse with able men, of clear understandings and piercing wits, about the controverted difficulties in religion, yea, about some criticisms in languages and sciences, is both pleasant and profitable; but nothing to this heavenly discourse of a believer. Oh, how refreshing and savoury are his expressions! How his words do pierce and melt the heart! How they transform the hearers into other men, that they think they are in heaven all the while? How doth his doctrine drop as the rain,

[m] Nemo potest personam diu ferre. Ficta in naturam suam cito recidunt. Quibus veritas subest, quæque ex solido enascuntur, tempore ipso in majus meliusque procedunt.—*Seneca de Clement.* lib. i. c. 1. p. 463.

and his speech distil as the gentle dew; as the small rain upon the tender herb; and as the showers upon the grass; while his tongue is expressing the name of the Lord, and ascribing greatness to his God! (Deut. xxxii. 1—3.) Is not his feeling, sweet discourse of heaven, even like that box of precious ointment, which being opened to pour on the head of Christ, doth fill the house with the pleasure of its perfume? All that are near may be refreshed by it. His words are like the precious ointment on Aaron's head, that ran down upon his beard, and the skirts of his garments, even like the dew of Hermon; and as the dew that descendeth from the celestial Mount Zion, where the Lord hath commanded the blessing, even life for evermore. (Psal. cxxxiii. 3.) This is the man who is as Job; "When the candle of God did shine upon his head, and when by his light he walked through darkness: when the secret of God was upon his tabernacle, and when the Almighty was yet with him: then the ear that heard him, did bless him; and the eye that saw him, gave witness to him." (Job xxix. 3—5, 11.) Happy the people that have a heavenly minister; happy the children and servants that have a heavenly father or master; happy the man that hath heavenly associates, if they have but hearts to know their happiness! This is the companion who will watch over thy ways; who will strengthen thee when thou art weak; who will cheer thee when thou art drooping, and comfort thee with the same comforts wherewith he hath been so often comforted himself. (2 Cor. i. 4.) This is he that will be blowing at the spark of thy spiritual life, and always drawing thy soul to God, and will be saying to thee, as the Samaritan woman, 'Come and see one that hath told me all that ever I did, one that hath ravished my heart with his beauty; one that hath loved our souls to the death.' Is not this the Christ? Is not the knowledge of God and him eternal life? Is not it the glory of the saints to see his glory? If thou come to this man's house, and sit at his table, he will feast thy soul with the dainties of heaven:[n] thou shalt meet with a better than Plato's philosophical feast, even a taste of that feast of fat things; "of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wine on the lees well refined;" (Isa. xxv. 6;) that thy soul may be satisfied as with

[n] Junius writes of himself in his Life, that when he lay in the sin of atheism he was driven by a tumult into a countryman's house, where he received the first spark of zeal, kindled in him by the countryman's zealous discourse; and the countryman also received an increase of knowledge from him, who then had knowledge without zeal.

marrow and fatness, and thou mayest praise the Lord with joyful lips. (Psal. lxiii. 5.) If thou travel with this man on the way, he will be directing and quickening thee in thy journey to heaven: if thou be buying or selling, or trading with him in the world, he will be counselling thee to lay out for the inestimable treasure. If thou wrong him, he can pardon thee, remembering that Christ hath not only pardoned great offences to him, but will also give him this invaluable portion. If thou be angry, he is meek, considering the meekness of his heavenly pattern; or if he fall out with thee, he is soon reconciled, when he remembereth that in heaven you must be everlasting friends. This is the Christian of the right stamp: this is the servant that is like his Lord; these be the innocent that save the island, and all about them are the better where they dwell. O sirs, I fear the men I have described are very rare, even among the religious; but were it not for our own shameful negligence, such men we might all be. What families; what towns; what commonwealths; what churches, should we have, if they were but composed of such men! but that is more desirable than hopeful, till we come to that land which hath no other inhabitants, save what are incomparably beyond this. Alas! how empty are the speeches, and how unprofitable the society, of all other sorts of Christians in comparison of these! A man might perceive by his divine song, and high expression, (Deut. xxxii. and xxxiii.) that Moses had been often with God, and that God showed him part of his glory. Who could have composed such spiritual psalms, and poured out praises as David did, but a man after God's own heart; and a man that was near the heart of God, and no doubt had God also near his heart? Who could have preached such spiritual doctrine, and dived into the precious mysteries of salvation, as Paul did, but one who had been called with a light from heaven, and had been wrapped up into the third heavens, in the Spirit, and there had seen the unutterable things? If a man should come down from heaven amongst us, who had lived in the possession of that blessed state, how would men be desirous to see or hear him! and all the country, far and near, would leave their business and crowd about him: happy would he think himself that could get a sight of him; how would men long to hear what reports he would make of the other world; and what he had seen; and what the blessed there enjoy! Would they not think this man the best companion, and his discourse to be of all most profitable? Why,

sirs, every true believing saint shall be there in person, and is frequently there in spirit, and hath seen it also in the glass of the Gospel. Why then do you value their company no more; and why do you inquire no more of them; and why do you relish their discourse no better? Well, for my part, I had rather have the fellowship of a heavenly-minded Christian, than of the most learned disputers, or princely commanders.

Sect. X. 8. Consider, There is no man so highly honoureth God, as he who hath his conversation in heaven; and without this we deeply dishonour him. Is it not a disgrace to the father, when the children do feed on husks, and are clothed in rags, and accompany with none but rogues and beggars? Is it not so to our Father, when we who call ourselves his children, shall feed on earth, and the garb of our souls be but like that of the naked world? And when our hearts shall make this clay and dust their more familiar and frequent company, who should always stand in our Father's presence, and be taken up in his own attendance? Surely, it beseems not the spouse of Christ, to live among his scullions and slaves, when they may have daily admittance into his presence-chamber; he holds forth the sceptre, if they will but enter. Surely we live below the rates of the Gospel, and not as becometh the children of a king, even of the great King of all the world. We live not according to the height of our hopes, nor according to the plenty that is in the promises, nor according to the provision of our Father's house, and the great preparations made for his saints. It is well we have a Father of tender bowels, who will own his children, even in dirt and rags: it is well the foundation of God stands sure, and that the Lord knoweth who are his: or else he would hardly take us for his own, so far do we live below the honour of saints: if he did not first challenge his interest in us, neither ourselves nor others could know us to be his people. But, oh! when a Christian can live above, and rejoice his soul in the things that are unseen; how doth God take himself to be honoured by such a one! The Lord may say, 'Why, this man believes me: I see he can trust me, and take my word: he rejoiceth in my promises, before he hath possession: he can be glad and thankful for that which his bodily eyes did never see: this man's rejoicing is not in the flesh: I see he loves me, because he minds me: his heart is with me, he loves my presence: and he shall surely enjoy it in my kingdom for ever.' "Because thou hast seen," saith Christ to Thomas, "thou hast believed;

but blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." (John xx. 29.) How did God take himself honoured by Caleb and Joshua, when they went into the promised land, and brought back to their brethren a taste of the fruits, and gave it commendation, and encouraged the people! And what a promise and recompense do they receive! (Numb. xiv. 24, 30.) For those that honour him, he will honour. (1 Sam. ii. 30.)

Sect. XI. 9. Consider, If thou make not conscience of this duty of diligent keeping thy heart in heaven, First, Thou disobeyest the flat commands of God: Secondly, Thou losest the sweetest parts of Scripture: Thirdly, And dost frustrate the most gracious discoveries of God.

God hath not left it as a thing indifferent, and at thy own choice, whether thou wilt do it or not. He hath made it thy duty, as well as the means of thy comfort, that so a double bond might tie thee not to forsake thy own mercies. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above; set your affections on things above, not on things on earth." (Col. iii. 1, 2.) The same God that hath forbidden thee to murder, to steal, to commit adultery, incest, or idolatry, hath forbidden thee the neglect of this great duty; and darest thou wilfully disobey him? Why makest thou not conscience of the one as well as of the other? Secondly, Besides, thou losest the most comfortable passages of the Word. All those most glorious descriptions of heaven, all those discoveries of our future blessedness, all God's revelations of his purposes towards us, and his frequent and precious promises of our rest; what are they all but lost to thee? Are not these the stars in the firmament of the Scripture, and the most golden lines in that book of God? Of all the Bible, methinks thou shouldst not part with one of those promises or predictions; no, not for a world. As heaven is the perfection of all our mercies, so the promises of it in the Gospel, are the very soul of the Gospel. That word, which was sweeter to David than the honey and the honeycomb, and to Jeremy, the joy and rejoicing of his heart, (Jer. xv. 16,) the most pleasant part of this thou losest. Thirdly, Yea, thou dost frustrate the preparations of Christ for thy joy, and makest him to speak in vain. Is a comfortable word from the mouth of God of so great worth, that all the comforts of the world are nothing to it; and dost thou neglect and overlook so many of them? Reader, I entreat thee to ponder it, why God should reveal so much of his counsel, and tell us beforehand of the joys we shall possess, but only that

he would have us know it for our joy? If it had not been to make comfortable our present life, and fill us with the delights of our foreknown blessedness, he might have kept his purpose to himself, and never have let us know till we come to enjoy it, nor have revealed it to us till death had discovered it, what he meant to do with us in the world to come; yea, when we had got possession of our rest, he might still have concealed its eternity from us, and then the fears of losing it again, would have bereaved us of much of the sweetness of our joys. But it hath pleased our Father to open his counsel, and to let us know the very intent of his heart, and to acquaint us with the eternal extent of his love; and all this that our joy may be full, and we might live as the heirs of such a kingdom. And shall we now overlook all, as if he had revealed no such matter? Shall we live in earthly cares and sorrows, as if we knew of no such thing? And rejoice no more in these discoveries, than if the Lord had never written it? If thy prince had sealed thee but a patent of some lordship, how oft wouldst thou be casting thine eye upon it, and make it thy daily delight to study it, till thou shouldst come to possess the dignity itself. And hath God sealed thee a patent of heaven, and dost thou let it lie by thee, as if thou hadst forgot it! O that our hearts were as high as our hopes, and our hopes as high as these infallible promises!

Sect. XII. 10. Consider, It is but equal that our hearts should be on God, when the heart of God is so much on us. If the Lord of glory can stoop so low, as to set his heart on sinful dust, surely one would think we should easily be persuaded to set our hearts on Christ and glory, and to ascend to him in our daily affections, who vouchsafeth to condescend to us! Oh, if God's delight were no more in us, than ours is in him, what should we do; what a case were we in! Christian, dost thou not perceive that the heart of God is set upon thee, and that he is still minding thee with tender love, even when thou forgettest both thyself and him? Dost thou not find him following thee with daily mercies, moving upon thy soul, providing for thy body, preserving both? Doth he not bear thee continually in the arms of love; and promise that all shall work together for thy good; and suit all his dealings to thy greatest advantage, and give his angels charge over thee; and canst thou find in thy heart to cast him by, and be taken up with the joys below, and forget thy Lord, who forgets not thee? Fie upon this unkind ingratitude! Is not this the sin that Isaiah so so-

lemnly doth call both heaven and earth to witness against? "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib, but Israel doth not know; my people doth not consider." (Isa. i. 2, 3.) If the ox or ass do straggle in the day, they likely come to their home at night, but we will not so much as once a day, by our serious thoughts ascend to God. When he speaks of his own respects to us, hear what he saith, "when Zion saith, The Lord hath forsaken, my Lord hath forgotten me: Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget: behold! I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands, thy walls are continually before me." (Isa. xlix. 14.) But, when he speaks of our thoughts to him, the case is otherwise. "Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire; yet my people have forgotten me days without number." (Jer. ii. 32.) As if he should say, You will not forget the clothes on your backs, you will not forget your braveries and vanities! you will not rise one morning, but you will remember to cover your nakedness. And are these of more worth than your God; or of more concernment than your eternal life; and yet you can forget these day after day? O brethren, give not God cause to expostulate with us, as "Ye are they that have forsaken the Lord, and that forget my holy mountain." (Isa. lxv. 11.) But rather admire his minding of thee, and let it draw thy mind again to him, and say, "What is man, that thou shouldst magnify him; and that thou shouldst set thy heart upon him; and that thou shouldst visit him every morning, and try him every moment?" (Job vii. 17, 18.) So let thy soul get up to God, and visit him every morning, and thy heart be towards him every moment.

Sect. XIII. 11. Consider, Should not our interest in heaven, and our relation to it, continually keep our hearts upon it; besides that excellency which is spoken of before. Why, there our Father keeps his court. Do we not call him "Our Father which art in heaven?" Ah! ungracious unworthy children, that can be so taken up in their play below as to be mindless of such a Father? Also, there is Christ our Head, our Husband, our Life; and shall we not look towards him, and send to him, as oft as we can, till we come to see him face to face? If he were, by transubstantiation, in the sacraments, or other ordinances, and that as gloriously as he is in heaven, then there were some reason for our lower thoughts; but when the heavens must receive him till

the restitution of all things, let them also receive our hearts with him. There, also, is our mother. For Jerusalem, which is above, is the mother of us all. (Gal. iv. 26.) And there are multitudes of our elder brethren. There are our friends and our ancient acquaintance, whose society in the flesh we so much delighted in, and whose departure hence we so much lamented. And is this no attractive to thy thoughts? If they were within thy reach on earth, thou wouldst go and visit them; and why wilt thou not oftener visit them in spirit, and rejoice beforehand to think of thy meeting them there again? Saith old Bullinger, "Socrates gaudet sibi moriendum esse, propterea quod Homerum, Hesiodum, et alios præstantissimos viros se visurum crederet; quanto magis ego gaudeo, qui certus sum me visurum esse Christum, Servatorem meum, æternum Dei Filium, in assumptâ carne; et præterea tot sanctissimos et eximios Patriarchas," &c. Socrates rejoiced that he should die, because he believed he should see Homer, Hesiod, and other excellent men; how much more do I rejoice, who am sure to see Christ, my Saviour, the eternal Son of God, in his assumed flesh; and, besides, so many holy and excellent men. When Luther desired to die a martyr, and could not obtain it, he comforted himself with these thoughts, and thus did write to them in prison: "Vestra vincula mea sum, vestri carceres et ignes mei sunt, dum confiteor et prædico, vobisque simul compatior et congratulor;" Yet this is my comfort, your bonds are mine, your prisons and fires are mine, while I confess and preach the doctrine for which you suffer, and while I suffer and congratulate with you in your sufferings. Even so should a believer look to heaven, and contemplate the blessed state of the saints, and think with himself, Though I am not yet so happy as to be with you, yet this is my daily comfort, you are my brethren and fellow members in Christ, and therefore your joys are my joys, and your glory, by this near relation, is my glory, especially while I believe in the same Christ, and hold fast the same faith and obedience, by which you were thus dignified; and also, while I rejoice in spirit with you, and in my daily meditations congratulate your happiness. Moreover, our house and home is above, "for we know if this earthly house of our tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Why do we, then, look no oftener towards it, and groan not earnestly, desiring to be clothed upon with our house, which is from heaven? (2 Cor. v. 1, 2.)

Surely, if our home were far meaner, we should yet remember it, because it is our home. You use to say, "Home is home, be it never so poor;" and should such a home then be no more remembered? If you were but banished into a strange land, how frequent thoughts would you have of home; how oft would you think of your old companions! which way ever you went, or what company soever you came in, you would still have your hearts and desires there. You would even dream in the night that you were at home; that you saw your father, or mother, or friends; that you were talking with wife, or children, or neighbours. And why is it not thus with us in respect of heaven? Is not that more truly and properly our home where we must take up our everlasting abode than this, which we are looking every hour, when we are separated from, and shall see it no more; we are strangers, and that is our country. (Heb. xi. 14, 15.) We are heirs, and that is our inheritance; even an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, that fadeth not away, is reserved in heaven for us. (1 Pet. i. 4.) We are here in continual distress and want, and there lies our substance; even that better and more enduring substance. (Heb. x. 34.) We are here fain to be beholden to others, and there lies our own perpetual treasure. (Matt. vi. 21.) Yea, the very hope of our souls is there; all our hope of relief from our distresses; all our hope of happiness, when we are here miserable; all this hope is laid up for us in heaven, whereof we hear in the true word of the Gospel. (Col. i. 5.) Why, beloved Christians, have we so much interest, and so seldom thoughts; have we so near relation, and so little affection? are we not ashamed of this? Doth it become us to be delighted in the company of strangers, so as to forget our Father and our Lord, or to be so well pleased with those that hate and grieve us, as to forget our best and dearest friends; or to be so besotted with borrowed trifles, as to forget our own profession and treasure; or to be so taken up with a strange place, as not once a day to look toward home; or to fall in love with tears and wants, as to forget our eternal joy and rest? Christians, I pray you think whether this become us, or whether this be the part of a wise or thankful man? Why, here thou art like to other men, as the heir under age, who differs not from a servant; but there it is that thou shalt be promoted, and fully estated in all that was promised. Surely, God useth to plead his propriety in us, and from thence to conclude to do us good, even because we are his own people,

whom he hath chosen out of all the world; and why then do we not plead our interest in him, and thence fetch arguments to raise up our hearts, even because he is our own God, and because the place is our own possession? Men use in other things to over-love and over-value their own, and too much to mind their own things. Oh, that we would mind our own inheritance, and value it but half as it doth deserve!

Sect. XIV. 12. Lastly, Consider, There is nothing else that is worth the setting our hearts on.[o] If God have them not, who or what shall have them? If thou mind not thy rest, what wilt thou mind? As the disciples said of Christ, Hath any man given him meat to eat, that we know not of? (John iv. 32, 33;) so say I to thee. Hast thou found out some other God or heaven, that we know not of; or something that will serve thee instead of rest? Hast thou found on earth an eternal happiness; where is it, and what is it made of: or who was the man that found it out, or who was he that last enjoyed it? Where dwelt he, and what was his name? Or art thou the first that hast found this treasure, and that ever discovered heaven on earth? Ah, wretch! trust not to thy discoveries, boast not of thy gain till experience bid thee boast, or rather take up with the experience of thy forefathers, who are now in the dust, and deprived of all, though sometime they were as lusty and jovial as thou. I would not advise thee to make experiments at so dear rates, as all those do that seek after happiness below, lest, when the substance is lost, thou find too late that thou didst catch but a shadow; lest thou be like those men that will needs search out the philosopher's stone, though none could effect it that went before them; and to buy their experience with the loss of their own estates and time, which they might have had at a cheaper rate, if they would have taken up with the experience of their predecessors. So I would wish thee not to disquiet thyself in looking for that which is not on earth; lest thou learn thy experience with the loss of thy soul, which thou mightest have learned at easier terms, even by the warnings of

[o] Simile tu putas esse, utrum cures de frumento, &c. an ad hæc sacra et sublimia accedas? sciturus quæ natura sit Diis, quæ voluntas, quæ conditio, quæ forma, quis animum tuum casus expectet, ubi nos à corporibus dismissos natura componit? Quid sit quod hujus mundi gravissima quæque in medio sustineat? supra levia suspendat? in summum ignem ferat? Sydera cursibus suis excitet? Cætera deinceps ingentibus plena miraculis.—*Seneca de Brevit. Vitæ*, cap. 19. How much more may a Christian say so of his expected glory!

God in his word, and loss of thousands of souls before thee. It would pity a man to see that men will not believe God in this, till they have lost their labour, and heaven, and all. Nay, that many Christians, who have taken heaven for their resting place, do lose so many thoughts needlessly on earth, and care not how much they oppress their spirits, which should be kept nimble and free for higher things. As Luther said to Melancthon, when he over-pressed himself with the labours of his ministry, so may I much more say to thee, who oppressest thyself with the cares of the world: "Vellem te adhuc decies plus obrui. Adeo me nihil tui miseret, qui toties monitus, ne onerares teipsum tot oneribus, et nihil audis, omnia bene monita contemnis. Erit cum sero stultum tuum hunc velum frustra damnabis, quo jam ardes solus omnia portare, quasi ferrum aut saxum sis." "It were no matter if thou wert oppressed ten times more; so little do I pity thee, who, being so often warned that thou shouldst not load thyself with so many burdens, dost no whit regard it, but contemnest all these wholesome warnings. Thou wilt shortly, when it is too late, condemn this thy foolish forwardness, which makes thee so desirous to bear all this, as if thou wert made of iron or stone." Alas! that a Christian should rather delight to have his heart among these thorns and briars, than in the bosom of his crucified, glorified Lord! Surely, if Satan should take thee up to the mountain of temptation, and show thee the kingdoms and glory of the world, he could show thee nothing that is worthy thy thoughts, much less to be preferred before thy rest. Indeed, so far as duty and necessity require it, we must be content to mind the things below; but who is he that contains himself within the compass of those limits? And yet if we bound our cares and thoughts as diligently as ever we can, we shall find the least to be bitter and burdensome; even as the least wasp hath a sting, and the smallest serpent hath his poison. As old Hiltenius said of Rome: "Est proprium Romanæ potestatis ut sit ferrum, et licet digiti minorentur ad parvitatem acus, tamen manent ferrei." "It is proper to the Roman power to be of iron, and though the fingers of it be diminished to the smallness of a needle, yet they are iron still." The like may I say of our earthly cares; it is their property to be hard and troublous, and so they will be when they are at the least. Verily, if we had no higher hopes than what are on earth, I should take man for a most silly creature, and his work and wages, all his travel and his felicity, to be no better than dreams and vanity, and scarce

worth the minding or mentioning; especially to thee, a Christian, should it seem so, whose eyes are opened by the Word and Spirit, to see the emptiness of all these things, and the precious worth of the things above. Oh, then, be not detained by these silly things, but if Satan present them to thee in a temptation, send them away from whence they came, as Pellicanus did send back the silver bowl which the bishop had sent him for a token, with this answer: "Astricti sunt quotquot Tiguri cives et inquilini, bis singulis annis, solemni jura mento, ne quis eorum ullum munus ab ullo principe accipiat." "All that are citizens and inhabitants of Zurich, are solemnly sworn twice a year not to receive any gift from any prince abroad." Say thou, We the citizens and inhabitants of heaven, are bound by solemn and frequent covenants, not to have our hearts enticed or entangled with any foreign honours or delights, but only with those of their own country. If thy thoughts should, like the laborious bee, go over the world from flower to flower, from creature to creature, they would bring thee no honey or sweetness home, save what they gathered from their relations to eternity.

Object. But you will say, perhaps, Divinity is of larger extent than only to treat of the life to come, or the way thereto; there are many controversies of great difficulty, which therefore require much of our thoughts, and so they must not be all of heaven.

Answ. For the smaller controversies which have vexed our times, and caused the doleful divisions among us, I express my mind as that of Graserus: [p] "Cum in visitatione ægrotorum, et ad emigrationem ex hac vita ad beatam præparatione deprehendisset, controversias illas theologicas, quæ scientiam quidem inflantem pariunt, conscientias vero fluctuantes non sedant, quæque hodie magna animorum contentione agitantur, et magnos tumultus in rebus publicis excitant, nullum prorsis usum habere, quinimo conscientias simpliciorum non aliter ac olim in papatu humana figmenta intricare; cœpit ab eis toto animo abhorrere, et in publicis concionibus tantum ea proponere, quæ ad

[p] He that comes to us is either learned or unlearned; if learned, then he can inquire into the weakness of reasons, and upon prayers for the Spirit's illumination, he may know what party to join with; but if he be unlearned, let him follow the simplicity of Scripture, and he will not easily be deceived; let him go to the middle way between extremes, and he shall not err.—*Dr. Johan Stegman. Dodecad. de Eccles. Viator*, p. 219. And I think it were well if the learned would do as he adviseth the unlearned. I am sure it were better for the church and themselves, unless he would have the unlearned the wiser, honester, and happier men.

fidem salvificam in Christum accedendam, et ad pietatem veram juxta verbum Dei exercendam, veramque consolationem in vita et morte præstandam faciebant:" "When he had found in his visiting the sick, and in his own preparations for well dying, that the controversies in divinity, which beget a swelling knowledge, but do not quiet troubled consciences, and which are at this day agitated with such contention of spirits, and raise such tumults in commonwealths, are indeed utterly useless; yea, and moreover do entangle the consciences of the simple, just as the human inventions in popery formerly did; he begun with full bent of mind to shun or abhor them, and in his public preaching to propound only those things which tended to the kindling a true faith in Jesus Christ, and to the exercise of true godliness, according to the word of God, and to the procuring of true consolation both in life and death." I can scarcely express my own mind more plainly than this historian's expressions of the mind of Graserus.[q] While I had some competent measure of health, and looked at death as at a greater distance, there was no man more delighted in the study of controversy; but when I saw dying men have no mind on it, and how unsavoury and uncomfortable such conference was to them, and when I had oft been near to death myself, and found no delight in them further than they confirmed or illustrated the doctrine of eternal glory, I have minded them ever since the less, though every truth of God is precious, and it is the sin and shame of professors that they are no more able to defend the truth; yet should all our study of controversy be still in relation to this perpetual rest, and consequently be kept within its bounds, and with most Christians, not have the twentieth part of our time or thoughts. Who that hath tried both studies, doth not cry out, as Summerhard was wont to do of the popish school-divinity, "Quis me

[q] Sacrilegæ sine dubio blasphemiæ alligatis, cum quis vestras controversias nominare ausit stultas; ineruditas quæstiones, profanas inanias, verborum pugnas; h. e. uno verbo, nugas. Ego verò quid de me sentiatis parum curo: hoc palam dico: stolidas, vanas, inutiles, indoctas disputationes; vid. nænias et gerras esse omnes eas, quæ vel nihil faciunt ad pietatem et ædificationem ecclesiæ, vel in verbo Dei non sunt, plene revelatæ, explicatæ, deciæ, et sic à Spiritu Sancto ad salutem minus necessariæ judicatæ. At tales non sunt hodiernæ quædam controversiæ. Vera me scribere, judicabit olim ecclesia; judicabit ipse Christus. Soletis supra modum exaggerare minutissimas liticulas quasi à quibus cardo sempiternæ salutis unicè dependeat. At longe aliter sentiunt quicunque nondum sunt vestris præconceptis opinionibus fascinati; et contagio vestro infecti.—*Rupert. Meldenius Parænesi Votiv. pro Pace Eccles.* fol. d. 3.

miserum tandem liberabit ab ista rixosa theologia?" "Who will once deliver me, wretch, from this wrangling kind of dignity?" And as it is said of Bucholcer: "Cum eximiis à Deo dotibus esset decoratus, in certamen tamen cum rabiosis illius seculi theologis descendere noluit. Desii (inquit) disputare, cœpi supputare: quoniam illud dissipationem, hoc collectionem significat. Vidit enim ab iis controversias moveri, quas nulla unquam amoris Dei scintilla calefecerat: vidit ex diuturnis theologorum rixis, utilitatis nihil, detrimenti plurimum in ecclesias redundassi:" i. e. "Though he was adorned by God with excellent gifts, yet would he never enter into contention with the furious divines of that age. I have ceased," saith he, "my disputations, and now begin my supputation; for that signifieth dissipation, but this collection." For he saw, that those men were the movers of controversies who had never been warmed with one spark of the love of God; he saw, that from the continual brawls of divines, no benefit, but much hurt, did accrue to the churches." And it is worth the observing, which the historian adds: "Quapropter omnis ejus cura in hoc erat, ut auditores fidei suæ commissos, doceret bene vivere et beate mori; et annotatum in universariis amici ejus repererunt, permultos in extremo agone constitutos gratias ipsi hoc nomine egisse, quod ipsius ductu servatorem suum Jesum agnovissent, cujus in cognitione pulchrum vivere, mori vero longe pulcherrimum ducerent. Atque haud scio annon hoc ipsum longe Bucholcero coram Deo sit gloriosius futurum, quam si aliquot contentiosorum libellorum myriadas posteritatis memoriæ consecrassat:" i. e. "Therefore this was all his care, that he might teach his hearers committed to his charge, to live well, and die happily; and his friends found noted down in his papers a great many of persons, who in their last agony did give him thanks for this very reason, that by his direction they had come to the knowledge of Jesus their Saviour; in the knowledge of whom, they esteem it sweet to live, but to die far more sweet. And I cannot tell whether this very thing will not prove more glorious to Bucholcer before God, than if he had consecrated to the memory of posterity many myriads of contentious writings." And as the study of controversies is not the most pleasant nor the most profitable, so much less the public handling of them; for to do it with the greatest meekness and ingenuity, yet shall we meet with such unreasonable men, as the said Bucholcer did, "qui arrepta ex aliquibus voculis calumniandi materia, hæreseos insi-

mulare et traducere optimum virum non erubescerent; frustra obtestante ipso, dextrè data, dextrè acciperent:" i. e., "who, taking occasion of reproach from some small words, were not ashamed to traduce the good man, and accuse him of heresy, while he in vain obtested with them, that they should take in good part what was delivered with a good intention." Siracides saith, in Ecclesiasticus, chap. xxvi., that a scolding woman shall be sought out for to drive away the enemies, but experience of all ages tells us, to our sorrow, that the wrangling divine is their chiefest inlet, and no such scarecrow to them at all.

So then it is clear to me that there is nothing worth our minding but heaven, and the way to heaven.

All the question will be about the affairs of church and state. Is not this worth our minding, to see what things will come to, and how God will conclude our differences?

Answ. So far as they are considered as the providences of God, and as they tend to the settling of the Gospel, and government of Christ, and so to the saving of our own, and our posterity's souls, they are well worth our diligent observation: but these are only their relations to eternity. Otherwise, I should look upon all the stirs and commotions in the world, but as the busy gadding of a heap of ants, or the swarming of a nest of wasps or bees; the spurn of a man's foot destroys all their labour: or as an interlude, or a tragedy, of a few hours long.[r] They first quarrel, and then fight, and let out one another's blood, and bring themselves more speedily and violently to their graves, which, however, they could not have long delayed, and so come down, and the play is ended. And the next generation succeeds them in their madness, and makes the like bustle in the world for a time; and so they also come down, and lie in the dust. Like the Roman gladiators, that would kill one another by the hundreds, to make the beholders a solemn show; or as the young men of Joab and Abner, that must play before them, by stabbing one another to the heart, and fall down and die, and there is an end of the sport. And is this worth a wise man's observance?

Surely, our very bodies themselves, for which we make all this ado in the world, are very silly pieces: look upon them (not as they are set out in a borrowed bravery) but as they lie rotting in a ditch, or grave; and you will say, they are silly things

[r] Read Cyprian's excellent contemplation of the world's vanity and wickedness, from his prospect in the mount, Epist. i. ad Donat.

indeed. Why then, surely all our dealings in the world, our buyings and sellings, and eating and drinking, our building and marrying, our wealth and honours, our peace and our war, so far as they relate not to the life to come, but tend only to the support and pleasing of this silly flesh, must needs themselves be silly things, and not worthy the frequent thoughts of a Christian: for the means (as such) is meaner than their end.

And now doth not thy conscience say as I say, that there is nothing but heaven, and the way to it, that is worth thy minding?

Sect. XV. Thus I have given thee these twelve arguments to consider of, and, if it may be, to persuade thee to a heavenly mind. I now desire thee to view them over; read them deliberately, and read them again, and then tell me, are they reason, or are they not? Reader, stop here, while thou answerest my question: Are these considerations weighty, or not? Are these arguments convincing, or not? Have I proved it thy duty, and a flat necessity, to keep thy heart on things above, or have I not? Say yea, or nay, man! If thou say nay, I am confident thou contradictest thine own conscience, and speakest against the light that is in thee, and thy reason tells thee, thou speakest falsely: if thou say yea, and acknowledge thyself convinced of the duty, bear witness then, that I have thine own confession: that very tongue of thine shall condemn thee, and that confession be pleaded against thee if thou now go home, and cast this off, and wilfully neglect such a confessed duty; and these twelve considerations shall be as a jury to convict thee, which I propounded, hoping they might be effectual to persuade thee. I have not yet fully laid open to you the nature and particular way of that duty, which I am all this while persuading you to; that is the next thing to be done: all that I have said hitherto, is but to make you willing to perform it. I know the whole work of man's salvation doth stick most at his own will; if we could once get over this block well, I see not what could stand before us. Be soundly willing, and the work is more than half done. I have now a few plain directions to give you, for to help you in doing this great work; but, alas! it is in vain to mention them, except you be willing to put them in practice. What sayest thou, reader? Art thou willing, or art thou not? Wilt thou obey, if I show thee the way of thy duty? However, I will set them down, and tender them to thee, and the Lord persuade thy heart to the work.

CHAP. IV.

Containing some Hinderances of a Heavenly Life.

SECT. I. The first task that I must here set thee, consists in the avoiding some dangerous[a] hinderances, which otherwise will keep thee off from this work, as they have done many a thousand before thee. If I show thee briefly where the rocks and gulf do lie, I hope thou wilt beware. If I stick up a mark at every quicksand, I hope I need to say no more, to put thee by it. Therefore, as thou valuest the comforts of a heavenly conversation, I here charge thee from God to beware most carefully of these impediments.

1. The first is, the living in a known unmortified sin. Observe this: O what havoc will this make in thy soul! O the joys that this hath destroyed! The blessed communion with God that this hath interrupted! The ruins it hath made amongst men's graces! The soul-strengthening duties that this hath hindered! And above all others, it is especially an enemy to this great duty.

Christian reader, I desire thee, in the fear of God, stay here a little, and search thy heart. Art thou one that hath used violence with thy conscience? Art thou a wilful neglecter of known duties, either public, private, or secret? Art thou a slave to thine appetite, in eating or drinking, or to any other commanding sense? Art thou a proud seeker of thine own esteem, and a man that must needs have men's good opinion, or else thy mind is all in a combustion? Art thou a wilfully peevish and passionate person, as if thou wert made of tinder, or gunpowder, ready to take fire at every word, or every wry look, or every

[a] Ad illam vitam requiritur, 1. Quod homo per virtuosam assuefactionem et gratiam, sit radicatus in virtutibus. Quod nullam delectationem habeat in appetitu vanæ gloriæ, in cupiditate divitiarum; in concupiscentia oculorum et gulæ. 2. Requiritur internum silentium, ut non occupet se circa exteriora; quod audierit, vel viderit foris, nihil curando, tanquam in somno occurrissent. 3. Amoroso adhæsio cum Deo: ut omnia ejus judicia, omnia facta, omnes doctrinas cum reverentia amplectatur. 4. Quod nihil aliud quærat, sed reputet sibi illum dilectum sufficientissimum, superexcellentem illum in corde suo diligat super omne quod potest videri, audiri, vel cogitari, vel imaginari, quia totus amabilis, totus desiderabilis, &c. 5. Quod sæpe reducat ad memoriam perfectiones Dei, et illis intime congratuletur.—*Gerson.* 3. *Part. in Alphabete Divini Amoris.*

supposed slighting of thee; or every neglect of a compliment or courtesy? Art thou a knowing deceiver of others in thy dealing, or one that hath set thyself to rise in the world? not to speak of greater sins, which all take notice of. If this be thy case, I dare say, heaven and thy soul are very great strangers: I dare say, thou art seldom in heart with God, and there is little hope it should ever be better, as long as thou continuest in these transgressions. These beams in thine eyes will not suffer thee to look to heaven; these will be a cloud between thee and God. When thou dost but attempt to study eternity, and to gather comfort from the life to come,[t] thy sin will presently look thee in the face, and say, These things belong not to thee. How shouldst thou take comfort from heaven, who takest so much pleasure in the lusts of thy flesh? O, how this will damp thy joys, and make the thoughts of that day and state to become thy trouble, and not thy delight! Every wilful sin that thou livest in, will be to thy comforts as water to the fire, when thou thinkest to quicken them, this will quench them; when thy heart begins to draw near to God, this will presently come in thy mind, and cover thee with shame, and fill thee with doubting. Besides (which is most to the point in hand), it doth utterly indispose thee, and disable thee to this work: when thou shouldst wind up thy heart to heaven, alas! it is biassed another way; it is entangled in the lusts of the flesh; and can no more ascend in divine meditation, than the bird can fly, whose wings are clipped, or that is entangled in the lime twigs, or taken in the snare. Sin doth cut the very sinews of the soul, therefore, I say of this heavenly life, as Mr. Bolton saith of prayer, Either it will make thee leave sinning, or sin will make thee leave it, and that quickly too, for these cannot continue together. If thou be here guilty, who readest this, I require thee sadly to think of this folly. O man! what a life dost thou lose; and what a life dost thou choose; what daily delights

[t] Nam absque munditia animi, et vita sanctitatis æmula, possibile non est sanctorum dicta intelligere. Ut siquis vult intueri lucem solis, oculum purgat, &c. Aut siquis civitatem aut regionem inspicere cupiat, pergit ad locum inspiciendi gratia. Ita et qui theologorum consequi intelligentiam cupit, abluere prius animam debet, atque detergere, et per vitæ morumque similitudinem, ipsos adire sanctos; ut voto atque instituto illis conjunctus, ea etiam quæ Deus illis revelavit, intelligat; et quasi unus ex illus effectus, effugiat peccatorum periculum, et ignem eis in die judicii preparatum. Recipiatque reposita sanctis in regnis cœlestibus præmia.—*Athanas. de Incarn. Verbi, translat. in fine.* "He that will do all that is lawful, will soon be drawn to that which is unlawful," saith Clemens Alex. (Pæd. l. cap. l.)

dost thou sell for the swinish pleasure of a stinking lust; what a Christ! what a glory dost thou turn thy back upon, when thou art going to the embracements of thy hellish pleasures! I have read of a gallant addicted to uncleanness, who at last meeting with a beautiful dame, and having enjoyed his fleshly desires of her, found her in the morning to be the dead body of one that he had formerly sinned with, which had been acted by the devil all night, and left dead again in the morning. Surely, all thy sinful pleasures are such: the devil doth animate them in the darkness of the night; but when God awakes thee, at the farthest at death, the deceit is vanished, and nothing left but a carcass to amaze thee, and be a spectacle of horror before thine eyes. Thou thinkest thou hast hold of some choice delight, but it will turn in thy hand (as Moses's rod) into a serpent; and then thou wouldst fain be rid of it, if thou knewest how; and would fly from the face of it, as thou dost now embrace it: and shall this now detain thee from the high delights of the saints? If heaven and hell can meet together, and if God can become a lover of sin, then mayest thou live in thy sin, and in the tastes of glory, and mayest have a conversation in heaven, though thou cherish thy corruption. If, therefore, thou find thyself guilty, never doubt on it, but this is the cause that estrangeth thee from heaven; and take heed lest it keep out thee, as it keeps out thy heart; and do not say, but thou wast bid take heed. Yea, if thou be a man that hitherto hast escaped, and knowest no reigning sin in thy soul, yet let this warning move thee to prevention, and stir up a dread of this danger in thy spirit. As Hunnius writes of himself, that, hearing the mention of the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost, it stirred up such fears in his spirit, that made him cry out, What if this should be my case? and so roused him to prayer and trial. So think thou, though thou yet be not guilty, what a sad thing were it, if ever this should prove thy case, and therefore watch. Especially resolve to keep from the occasions of sin, and, as much as is possible, out of the way of temptations.[t] The strongest Christian is unsafe among occasions of sin. O what need have we to pray daily, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil?" And shall we pray against them, and cast ourselves upon them? If David, Solomon, Peter, &c., teach you not, at least look upon the multitudes that have revolted of late times, and fallen into

[t] Nemo diu tutus periculoso proximus. Nec evadere diabolum servus Dei poterit, qui se diaboli laqueis implicavit.—*Cyprian.* epist. lxii. p. 169.

the most horrid sins, with religious pretences. As Christ thought meet to say to his disciples, "Remember Lot's wife; and what I say to one I say to all, Watch;" so say I, Remember these, and watch.

Sect. II. 2. A second hinderance carefully to be avoided, is, an earthly mind; for you may easily conceive that this cannot stand with a heavenly mind. God and Mammon, earth and heaven, cannot both have the delight of thy heart.[n] This makes thee like Anselm's bird, with a stone tied to the foot, which as oft as she took flight, did pluck her to the earth again. If thou be a man that hast fancied to thyself, some content or happiness to be found on earth, and beginnest to taste a sweetness in gain, and to aspire after a fuller and a higher estate; and hast hatched some thriving projects in thy brain, and art driving on thy rising design; believe it, thou art marching with thy back upon Christ, and art posting apace from this heavenly life. Why, hath not the world that from thee, which God hath from the heavenly believer? When he is blessing himself in his God, and rejoicing in hope of the glory to come, then thou art blessing thyself in thy prosperity, and rejoicing in hope of thy thriving here: when he is solacing his soul in the views of Christ, of the angels and saints, that he shall live with for ever, then art thou comforting thyself with thy wealth, in looking over thy bills and bonds, in viewing thy money, thy goods, thy cattle, thy buildings, or large possessions; and art recreating thy mind in thinking on thy hopes; of the favour of some great ones, on whom thou dependest; of the pleasantness of a plentiful and commanding state; of the larger provision for thy children after thee; of the rising of thy house, or the obeisance of thine inferiors. Are not these thy morning and evening thoughts, when a gracious soul is above with Christ? Dost thou not delight and please thyself with a daily rolling these thoughts in thy mind, when a gracious soul should have higher delights? If he were a fool by the sentence of Christ that said, "Soul, take thy rest,

[n] Non domus aut fundus, non æris acervus et auri ægroto Domini deduxit corpore febres; non animo curas: Valeat possessor oportet, &c.—*Horat.* Quis potest pauper esse qui non eget? qui non inhiat alieno? qui Deo dives est? magis pauper ille est qui cum multa habeat, plura desiderat. Dicam tandem quemadmodum sentio; nemo tam pauper potest esse quam natus est. Aves sine patrimonio vivunt, et indies pecua pascuntur: et hæc nobis tamen nota sunt, quæ omnia si non concupiscimus, possidemus. Igitur ut qui viam terit, eo fœlicior quo levior incedit: ita beatior in hoc itinere vivendi qui paupertate se sublevat, non sub divitiarum onere suspirat.—*Minut. Fœl. Octavius*, p. 398.

thou hast enough laid up for many years;" what a fool of fools art thou, that, knowing this, yet takest not warning, but in thy heart speakest the same words! Look them over seriously, and tell me what difference between this fool's expressions, and thy affections? I doubt not but thou hast more wit than to speak thy mind just in his language; but, man, remember thou hast to do with the Searcher of hearts. It may be, thou holdest on thy course of duty, and prayest as often as thou didst before; it may be, thou keepest in with good ministers, and with godly men, and seemest as forward in religion as ever: but what is all this to the purpose? Mock not thy soul, man, for God will not be so mocked. What good may yet remain in thee, I know not; but sure I am, thy course is dangerous, and, if thou follow it on, will end in dolour. Methinks I see thee befooling thyself, and tearing thy hair, and gnashing thy teeth, when thou hearest thy case laid open by God: "Thou fool, this night shall they require thy soul from thee; and then whose are all these things?" Certainly, so much as thou delightest and restest on earth, so much is abated of thy delights in God. Thine earthly mind may consist with thy profession and common duties, but it cannot consist with this heavenly duty.[x] I need not tell thee all this, if thou wouldst deal impartially, and not be a traitor to thy own soul: thou knowest thyself how seldom and cold, how cursory and strange, thy thoughts have been of the joys hereafter, ever since thou didst trade so eagerly for the world. Methinks I even perceive thy conscience stir now, and tell thee plainly that this is thy case. Hear it, man! Oh! hear it now, lest thou hear it in another manner when thou wouldst be full loth. O the cursed madness of many that seem to be religious; who thrust themselves into a multitude of employments, and think they can never have business enough till they are loaded with labours and clogged with cares; that their souls are as unfit to converse with God, as a man to walk with a mountain on his

[x] Cyprian, expounding the word "daily bread," saith, "We that have renounced this world, viz., in our baptismal covenant with Christ, and have cast away the riches and glory of it, in our belief of spiritual grace, must only ask for food and victuals, seeing our Lord telleth us, 'He that forsaketh not all that he hath, cannot be his disciple.'" Cypr. in Orat. Dom. in sect. xiv. p. 313: Avaritia est inordinatus amor temporalium, viz., omnis terrenæ substantiæ quæ potest esse de possessione hominis; et habitudinum respectivarum in rebus terrenis fundatarum, quas homo irrationabiliter appetit, sicut dominia et honores mundanos, quæ ex possessione talium oriuntur.—Et ita 1 Tim. vi. 10: Radix omnium malorum est cupiditas.—*Wicliff. Trialog.* lib. iii. cap. 18. pp. 72, 73.

back, and till he hath even transformed his soul almost into the nature of his drossy carcass, and made it as unapt to soar aloft as his body is to leap above the sun: and when all is done, and they have lost that heaven they might have had upon earth, they take up a few rotten arguments to prove it lawful, and then they think that they have solved all. Though these sots would not do so for their bodies, nor forbear their eating, or drinking, or sleeping, or sporting, though they could prove it lawful so to do, though, indeed, they cannot prove it lawful neither. They miss not the pleasures of this heavenly life, if they can but quiet their consciences, while they fasten upon lower and baser pleasures. For thee, O Christian, who hast tasted of these pleasures, I advise thee, as thou valuest their enjoyment, as ever thou wouldst taste of them any more, take heed of this gulf of an earthly mind;[y] for if once thou come to this, that thou wilt be rich, "thou fallest into temptation, and a snare, and into divers foolish and hurtful lusts:" it is St. Paul's own words. (1 Tim. vi. 9.) Set not thy mind, as Saul, on the asses, when the kingdom of glory is set before thee. Keep these things as thy upper garments, still loose about thee, that thou mayest lay them by whenever there is cause: but let God and glory be next thy heart, yea, as the very blood and spirit by which thou livest. Still remember that of the Spirit, "The friendship of the world is enmity with God: whosoever, therefore, will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." (James iv. 4.) And, "Love not the world, nor the things of the world: if any love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." (1 John ii. 15.) This is plain dealing, and happy he that faithfully receives it.

Sect. III. 3. A third hinderance which I must advise thee to beware is, the company of ungodly and sensual men. Not that I would dissuade thee from necessary converse,[z] or from doing them

[y] Quicquid nobis bono futurum erat, Deus et parens noster in proximo posuit. Non expectavit inquisitionem nostram, ultrò dedit; nocitura altissime pressit. Nihil nisi de nobis queri possumus. Ea quibus periremus, nolente rerum natura et abscondente, protulimus. Addiximus animum voluptati, cui indulgere initium omnium malorum est.—*Seneca*, epist. cx.; 1 Sam. ix. 20. Sed amor Dei adhuc est valde modicus et debilis: mundanus vero fortis et potens; repugnatque fortiter, ne nidum suum seu hospitium quod habuit ab infantia in homine perdat. Et quod plus molestat, ipse amor mundi oculis cernitur corporis, et sentitur dulcis esse ad retinendum; amarus vero ad perdendum: amor autem Dei è contra non videtur; et sentitur durus ad acquirendum, et dulcis ad dimittendum.—*Gerson*, part. iii. p. 382. *De Monte Contemplat.* cap. 21.

[z] I love the zeal of those Athenians, that would not wash in the same bath with the persecutors of Socrates. But this wise averseness from the known

any office of love, especially not from endeavouring the good of their souls, as long as thou hast an opportunity or hope: nor would I have thee conclude them to be dogs and swine, that so thou mayest evade the duty of reproof; nor yet to judge them such at all, as long as there is any hope of better, or before thou art certain they are such indeed. Much less can I approve of the practice of those who, because the most of the world are naught, do therefore conclude men, dogs, or swine, before ever they faithfully and lovingly did admonish them, yea, or perhaps before they have known them, or spoke with them: and hereupon they will not communicate with them in the Lord's-supper, but separate from them into distinct congregations. I persuade thee to no such ungodly separation, as I never found one word in Scripture where either Christ or his apostles denied admittance to any man that desired to be a member of the church, though but only professing to repent and believe; so neither did I ever there find that any but convicted heretics, and scandalous ones, and that for the most part after due admonition, were to be avoided or debarred our fellowship. And whereas it is urged that they are to prove their title to the privileges which they lay claim to, and not we to disprove it.[a] I answer, If that were granted, yet their mere sober professing to repent and believe in Christ, is as to us a sufficient evidence of their title to church-membership, and admittance thereto by baptism, supposing them not admitted before; and their being baptised persons, if at age, or members of the universal visible church, into which it is that they are baptised, and owning their baptismal profession, is sufficient evidence of their title to the supper, till they

enemies of peace, may, and must be, accompanied with a friendly correspondence with differing brethren.—*Bishop Hall, in the Peace-maker*, pp. 134, 135. Quemcunque Deus sistit, qua authoritate, quo jure homo depulsurus est, donec ipse Deus architector suæ domus, depulerit? Pudeat ergo Christianos, qui inscientissimis suis præjudiciis, aut impotentissimus studiis sic abripiuntur, ut quam Deus materiam domus suæ advocat, ipsi negent, avertant et omnibus viribus interturbent.—*Junius Irenic. in Psal.* cxxii. tom. i. p. 691. An excellent book for a censorious, separating, turbulent Christian to peruse. Lege Cypriani Epist. li. pp. 111, 112; of not departing from the unity of the church, because they are wicked.

[a] Verbo et disciplina Domini emendo quod possum, tolero quod non possum, fugio paleam ne hæc sim; non aream, ne nihil sim. As Austin excellently, cont. Cresc. lib. iii. c. 35; cited also by Willet, on John xvii. p. 66; i. e. What I can, I amend by the word and discipline of the Lord; what I cannot, I suffer. I avoid the chaff, lest I prove such myself; but not the flour, lest I prove nothing." Yet a necessary use of church censures I deny not; which how it was in the primitive times, and how terrible (præjudicium summum futuri judicii), Tertull. shows in Apologet. cap. 39.

do by heresy or scandal blot that evidence;[b] which evidence, if they do produce in the church of which they are members, yea, though they are yet weak in the faith of Christ, who is he that dare refuse to receive them? And this, after much doubting, dispute, and study of the Scriptures, I speak as confidently as almost any truth of equal moment: so plain is the Scripture in this point, to a man that brings his understanding to the model of Scripture, and doth not bring a model in his brain, and reduce all he reads to that model. The door of the visible church is incomparably wider than the door of heaven; and Christ is so tender, so bountiful, and forward to convey his grace, and the Gospel so free an offer and invitation to all, that surely Christ will keep no man off: if they will come quite over in spirit to Christ, they shall be welcome; if they will come but only to a visible profession, he will not deny them admittance there, because they intend to go no farther, but will let them come as near as they will; and that they come no further, shall be their own fault; and so it is not his readiness to admit such, nor the openness of the door of his visible church, that makes men hypocrites, but their own wickedness. Christ will not keep such out among infidels, for fear of making hypocrites: but when the net is drawn unto the shore, the fishes shall be separated; and when the time of harvest comes, "then the angels shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them that work iniquity." (Matt. xiii. 41.) There are many saints, or sanctified men, that yet shall never come to heaven, who are only saints by their separation from paganism, into fellowship with the visible church, but not saints in the strictest sense, by separation from the ungodly into the fellowship of the mystical body of Christ. (Heb. x. 29; Deut. vii. 6, xiv. 2, 21, xxvi. 19, and xxviii. 9; Exod. xix. 6; 1 Cor. vii. 13, 14; Rom. xi. 16; Heb. iii. 1, compared with verse 12; 1 Cor. iii. 17, and xiv. 33; 1 Cor. i. 2, compared with xi. 20, 21, &c.; Gal. iii. 26, compared with Gal. iii. 3, 4, iv. 11, and v. 2—4; John xv. 2.[c]

[b] Hilarius, lib. ad Const. Aug. inquit, Tutissimum nobis est primam et solam evangelicam fidem, in baptismate confessam intellectamque, retinere, &c. Qui credit omnia quæ hoc brevi symbolo comprehensa habemus, vitamque Christi præceptis conformem agere conatur, ex albo Christianorum non est expungendus, neque à communione cum aliis Christianæ cujuscunque ecclesiæ membris abigendus. E contra, qui ullam ex hisce articulis surcillat et suggillat, licet nomen Christiani sibi vendicet, ab orthodoxorum communione arcendus est, &c.—*Davenant pro Pace*, pp. 10, 11. vid. ult.

[c] Haud dubitem affirmare (inter Germ. doctores) illos qui falluntur et tamen communionem fraternam cum aliis retinere parati sunt, esse schismate

Thus far have I digressed, by way of caution, that you may not think that I dissuade you from lawful converse, but it is the unnecessary society of ungodly men, and too much familiarity with unprofitable companions, though they be not so apparently ungodly, that I dissuade you from.[d] There are many persons whom we may not avoid or excommunicate out of the church, no nor out of our private society, judicially, or by way of penalty to them, whom yet we must exclude from our too-much familiarity in way of prudence for preservation of ourselves. It is not only the profane, the swearer, the drunkard, and the enemies of godliness, that will prove hurtful companions to us, though these, indeed, are chiefly to be avoided; but too frequent society with dead-hearted formalists, or persons merely civil and moral, or whose conference is empty, unsavoury, and barren, may much divert our thoughts from heaven, and do ourselves a great deal of wrong.[e] As mere idleness and forgetting God, will keep a soul as certainly from heaven, as a profane, licentious, fleshly life; so also will the useless company of such idle, forgetful, negligent persons, as surely keep our hearts from heaven, as the company of men more dissolute and profane. Alas! our dulness and backwardness is such, that we have need of the most constant and powerful helps. A clod, or a stone that lies on the earth, is as prone to arise and fly in the air, as our hearts are naturally to move towards heaven. You need not hold nor hinder the earth and rocks, to keep them from flying up to the skies; it is sufficient that you do not help them. And, surely, if our spirits have not great assistance, they may easily be kept from flying aloft, though they never should meet with the least impediment. Oh, think of this in the choice of your company,

coram Deo magis excusatos, quam qui veras opiniones in hisce controversiis tuentur, et mutuam interim communionem cum aliis ecclesiis etiam desiderantibus aspernantur.—*D. Davenant de Pace Eccl.* pp. 24, 25.

[d] Optimé de hac re Calvinus in Matt. xiii. 37—40. ubi vid.

[e] I will tell who they be that may complain of the unprofitableness of Christians. It is the bawds, panders, robbers, witches, wizards; and so ale-houses, taverns, play-houses, gaming-houses, &c. To be unprofitable to these is no small profit.—*Tertul. Apolog. adv. Gentes*, cap. 43. There are many among us also that teach men to say and to do things reproachful to God, and wicked, and yet they come in the name of Jesus. And they are distinguished by several names, taken from certain men, as every one was the author of any doctrine or opinion. Some of them blaspheme God, the Creator of all, and Christ, &c. We communicate with none of these men, for we know them to be ungodly, irreligious, unrighteous, and unjust; and that they confess Christ only in name, but do not worship him in deed, though they call themselves Christians.—*Justin Martyr. Dialog. cum Tryphon.*

When your spirits are so powerfully disposed for heaven that you need no help to lift them up; but, as the flames, you are always mounting upward, and carrying with you all that is in your way, then you may, indeed, be less careful of your company: but till then, as you love the delights of a heavenly life, be careful therein. As it is reported of a lord that was near to his death,[f] and the doctor that prayed with him read over the Litany; "for all women labouring with child, for all sick persons and young children, &c.; from lightning and tempest, from plague, pestilence, and famine; from battle, murder, and sudden death," &c. "Alas!" saith he, "What is this to me who must presently die?" &c. so mayest thou say of such men's conference, who can talk of nothing but their callings and vanity. Alas! what is this to me who must shortly be in rest, and should now be refreshing my soul with its foretastes? What will it advantage thee to a life with God, to hear where the fair is such a day, or how the market goes, or what weather is, or is like to be; or when the moon changeth, or what news is stirring? Why, this is the discourse of earthly men. What will it conduce to the raising of thy heart God-ward, to hear that this is an able minister, or that a serious Christian, or that this was an excellent sermon, or that an excellent book; to hear a violent arguing, or tedious discourse of baptism, ceremonies, the power of the keys, the order of God's decrees, or other such controversies of great difficulty, but little importance? Yet this, for the most part, is the sweetest discourse that thou art like to have of a formal, speculative, dead-hearted professor. Nay, if thou hadst newly been warming thy heart in the contemplation of the blessed joys above, would not this discourse benumb thine affections and quickly freeze thy heart again? I

[f] O God, let me be dumb to all the world, so as I may ever have a tongue for thee and my own heart.—*Bishop Hall's Soliloq.* xxiii. p. 48. Seneca's separation I allow: Sanabimur, si modo separamur à cœtu. Hæc pars major esse videtur: ideo pejor est. Non tam bene cum rebus humanis agitur, ut meliora pluribus placeant. Argumentum pessimi, turba est. Quæramus quid optimè factum sit, non quid usitatissimum; et quid nos in possessione fœlicitatis æternæ constituat; non quid vulgo veritatis pessimo interpreti probatum sit. Vulgum autem, tam chlamydatos, quam coronam voco. Non enim colorem vestium quibus prætexta corpora sunt, aspicio: oculis de homine non credo. Habeo melius, certiusque lumen quo à falsis vera dijudicem. Animi bonum animus inveniat.—*Seneca de Vita Beat.* cap. 2. Ego confiteor imbecillitatem meam. Nunquam mores quos extuli (è turba) refero. Aliquid ex eo quod composui, turbatur; aliquid ex his quæ fugavi, redit.—*Seneca*, epist. 7. Fœlix est illorum conditio quibus datum est quam longissime ab impiorum cohabitatione abesse.—*Polanus*, in Ezek. ii. p. 82.

appeal to the judgment of any man that hath tried it, and maketh observations on the frame of his spirit. Men cannot well talk of one thing and mind another, especially things of such differing natures. You young men, who are most liable to this temptation, think sadly of what I say. Can you have your hearts in heaven on an alehouse bench, among your roaring, singing, swaggering companions, or when you work in your shops with none but such whose ordinary language is oaths, or filthiness, or foolish talking, or jesting? Nay, let me tell you thus much more; that if you choose such company when you might have better, and find most delight and content in such, you are so far from a heavenly conversation, that as yet you have no title to heaven at all, and in that estate shall never come there: for were your treasure there, your heart would not be on things so distant. (Matt. vi. 21.) In a word, our company will be part of our happiness in heaven, and it is a singular part of our furtherance to it, or hinderance from it. As the creatures living in the several elements are commonly of the temperature of the element they live in, as the fishes cold and moist like the water, the worms cold and dry as the earth, and so the rest: so are we usually like the society which we most converse in. He that never found it hard to have a heavenly mind in earthly company, it is certainly because he never tried.

Sect. IV. 4. A fourth hinderance to heavenly conversation, is, too frequent disputes about lesser truths, and especially when a man's religion lies only in his opinions: a sure sign of an unsanctified soul.[g] If sad examples be doctrinal to you, or the judgments of God upon us be regarded, I need to say the less upon this particular. It is legibly written in the faces of thousands; it is visible in the complexion of our diseased nation: this *facies hypocritica* is our *facies hypocratica*. He that hath the least skill in physiognomy may see that this complexion is mortal, and this picture-like, shadow-like visage affordeth our

[g] There must needs therefore be some toleration in controverted lesser doctrinals: that this is no Socinianism, hear one that was none: Apud nos vera fides est in Christi meritis; vera de vitæ sanctimonia doctrina valet; hoc inficiari non poterunt pontificii. At in his duobus cardinibus omnis Christianismus, vertitur. Quid ergo in nobis desiderant?—*D. Jos. Stegman. Dedicad. de Eccles. Viator. Præfat.* Ad fidem sufficit pauca nosse; in reliquis sufficit, Contrarium non tueri.—*Ibid.* mem. ii. p. 29. Quoad elementaria adeo dilucide S. Sanctus mentem suam in Scripturis declaravit, ut ex ipso verborum sono verus sensus statim hauriri queat.—*Ibid.* mem. xii. p. 229. Quando consequentiæ necessitas non est evidenter cognita, atque ita negatio illa ex infirmitate, non autem animi ex obfirmatione provenit; ut in patribus factum est, damnabilis error non incurritur.—*Ibid.* p. 226.

state a sad prognostic. You that have been my companions in armies and garrisons, in cities and countries, I know have been my companions in this observation, that they are usually men least acquainted with a heavenly life, who are the violent disputers about the circumstantials of religion. He whose religion is all in his opinions, will be most frequently and zealously speaking his opinions; and he whose religion lies in the knowledge and love of God in Christ, will be most delightfully speaking of that time when he shall enjoy God and Christ. As the body doth languish in consuming fevers, when the native heat abates within, and an unnatural heat inflaming the external parts succeeds; so, when the zeal of a Christian doth leave the internals of religion, and fly to ceremonials, externals, or inferior things, the soul must needs consume and languish: yea, though you were sure your opinions were true, yet when the chiefest of your zeal is turned thither, and the chiefest of your conference there laid out, the life of grace decays within, and your hearts are turned from this heavenly life. Not that I would persuade you to undervalue the least truth of God, nor that I do acknowledge the hot disputers of the times to have discovered the truth above their brethren;[h] but in case we should grant them to have hit on the truth, yet let every truth in our thoughts and speeches have their due proportion, and I am confident the hundredth part of our time and our conference would not be spent upon the now common themes. For as there are a hundred truths of far greater consequence, who do all challenge the precedency before these, so many of those truths alone are of a hundred times nearer concernment to our souls, and therefore should have an answerable proportion in our thoughts. Neither is it any excuse for our casting by those great, fundamental truths, because they are common and known already; for the chief improvement is yet behind, and the soul must be daily refreshed with the truth of Scripture, and the goodness of that which it offereth and promiseth, as the body must be with its daily food, or else the known truths that lie idle in your

[h] Hinc videas theologastros, ut primum eos hæc fœtida scabies ac desperata, (φιλονεικία) ingentis sapientiæ persuasione tumida, occupavit; rupta omni mora scriptitare. Controversias agitare, immo perinde acsi nullæ antea essent, novas suscitare, et obviam quemvis adversarium etiam nil tale cogitantem, nil hostile meruentem, deligere, &c.—*Rupert. Meldenius Parænes. Vot. pro Pac.* fol. c. 2. Opiniones ignotæ veteri ecclesia etiamsi hoc tempore sint receptissimæ, tamen non sunt dogmata catholicæ ecclesiæ.—*Melancthon apud Luther.* tom. i. disput. p. 441.

heads will no more nourish, or comfort, or save you, than the bread that lies still in your cupboards will feed you. Ah! he is a rare and precious Christian who is skilled in the improving of well-known truths. Therefore let me advise you that aspire after this joyous life, spend not too much of your thoughts, your time, your zeal, or your speeches, upon quarrels that less concern your souls; but when hypocrites are feeding on husks or shells, or on this heated food which will burn their lips far sooner than warm and strengthen their hearts, then do you feed on the joys above. I could wish you were all understanding men, able to defend every truth of God; and to this end that you would read and study controversy more;[1] and your understanding and stability in these days of trial is no small part of my comfort and encouragement. But still I would have the chiefest to be chiefly studied, and none to shoulder out your thoughts of eternity. The least controverted points are usually most weighty, and of most necessary frequent use to our souls.

For you, my neighbours and friends in Christ, I bless God that I have so little need to urge this hard upon you, or to spend my time and speeches in the pulpit on these quarrels, as I have been necessitated, to my discontent, to do elsewhere;[k] I rejoice in the wisdom and goodness of our Lord, who hath saved me much of this labour, 1. Partly by his tempering of your spirits to sincerity. 2. Partly by the doleful, yet profitable example of those few that went from us, whose former and present condition of spirit makes them stand, as the pillar of salt, for a con-

[1] It is a good saying of Picus Mirandula, wherewith D. Estius concludeth his oration 'De Certitudine Salutis; Veritatem Philosophia quærit, Theologie invenit, Religio possidet.' "Study to obey, not to dispute: turn not conscience into questions and controversies, lest while thou art resolving what to do, thou do just nothing Draw not all to reason, leave something to faith. Where thou canst not sound the bottom, admire the depth: kiss the book, and lay it down; weep over thy own ignorance, and send one hearty wish to heaven, O when shall I come to know as I am known! The time is at hand when all must be accomplished, and we accountable: when arts shall cease, and tongues be abolished, and knowledge vanish away. Do but think now one thought, what will be the joy of thy heart when thou canst truly say, 'Lord, thou hast written to me the great things of thy law, and I have not accounted them as strange things,'" &c.—*Pemble in Preface to Vindic. Gratiæ.* Necessaria ignoramus, quia non necessaria didicimus, inquit Rupertus, Meldenius, Paræneſi.

[k] As it is said of Erasmus, in his Life, Videbat plus satis tribui theologiæ argutatrici, priori prorsus abolita: sicque theologos Scoticis argutiis incumbere, ut non attingerent fontes divinæ sapientiæ. Read Bishop Hall's excellent book called 'The Peace-maker,' and his 'Pax Terris;' and Davenant's 'Adhortatio.'

tinual terror and warning to you, and so to be as useful as they were like to be hurtful. 3. Partly by the confessions and bewailings of this sin that you have heard from the mouth of the dying,[m] advising you to beware of changing your fruitful society for the company of deceivers. I do unfeignedly rejoice in these providences, and bless the Lord who thus establisheth his saints. Study well these precepts of the Spirit, "Him that is weak in the faith, receive, but not to doubtful disputations." (Rom. xiv. 1.) "But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes; and the servant of the Lord must not strive," (2 Tim. ii. 23;) "but avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law, for they are unprofitable and vain." (1 Tit. iii. 9.) "If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions, and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railing, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness. From such withdraw thyself." (1 Tim. iv. 3—5.)

Sect. V. 5. As you value the comforts of a heavenly life, take heed of a proud and lofty spirit.[n] There is such an antipathy between this sin and God, that thou wilt never get thy heart near him, nor get him near thy heart, so long as this prevaileth in it. If it cast the angels from heaven that were in it, it must needs keep thy heart estranged from it. If it cast our first parents out of paradise, and separated between the Lord and us, and brought his curse on all the creatures here below, it must needs then keep our hearts from paradise, and increase the cursed separation from our God. Believe it, hearers, a proud heart and a heavenly heart are exceeding contrary. Intercourse with God will keep men low, and that lowliness will further their

[m] Yet still I doubt not but we should be still learning to know more; as Dav. Chytræus said, when he lay on his death-bed: "Jucundiorem sibi discessum fore, si moribundus etiam aliquid dedidisset."

[n] Radix omnium malorum cupiditas: radix omnium malorum superbia. Hæc secundum viam intentionis: illa secundum viam executionis: hæc, ut quærens quo homo satiari possit: illa, quibus ad propositam fœlicitatem pervenire. Utraque ab illa infinita Dei capacitate, et descendens et degenerans; sentiente et gaudente homine etiam postquam à Deo aberravit non nisi infinito se posse repleri, suamque vel ex hoc magnitudinem approbante, sed frustra infinitum inter finita quærente. Utraque ergo prioris et veræ locum occupat; et est origo deinceps omnium aliorum malorum; sed utriusque prima origo est vera illa et divina capacitas: non quatenus Dei capacitas et à Deo data, sed quatenus suo actu vacua et nihilum subnotans.—*Gibieuf de Libert.* lib. ii. cap. 19. sect. 11. pp. 414, 415.

intercourse.[o] When a man is used to be much with God, and taken up in the study of his glorious attributes, he abhors himself in dust and ashes, and that self-abhorrence is his best preparative to obtain admittance to God again. Therefore, after a soul-humbling day, or in times of trouble, when the soul is lowest, it useth to have freest access to God, and savour most of the life above. He will bring them into the wilderness, and there he will speak comfortably to them. (Hos. ii. 14.) The delight of God is an humble soul, even him that is contrite, and trembleth at his word; and the delight of an humble soul is in God; and surely, where there is mutual delight, there will be freest admittance, and heartiest welcome, and most frequent converse. Heaven would not hold God and the proud angels together, but a humble soul he makes his dwelling; and surely if our dwelling be with him, and in him, and his dwelling also be with us, and in us, there must needs be a most near and sweet familiarity. But the soul that is proud cannot plead this privilege. God is so far from dwelling in it, that he will not admit it to any near access, but looks upon it afar off. (Psal. cxxxviii. 6.) The proud he resisteth, and the proud resisteth him, but to the humble he gives this and other graces. (1 Pet. v. 5.) A proud mind is a high mind in conceit, self-esteem, and carnal aspiring. A heavenly mind is a high mind indeed in God's esteem, and in higher, yet holy, aspiring. These two sorts of high-mindedness are more adverse to one another, than a high mind and a low: as we see that most wars and bloodshed is between princes and princes, and not between a prince and a ploughman. A low spirit and an humble is not so contrary to a high and heavenly, as a high and a proud. A grain of mustard-seed may come to be a tree; a small acorn may be a great oak; the sail of the windmill that is now down may presently be the highest of all; a subject that is low may be raised high, and he that is high may be yet higher, as long as he stands in subordination to his prince, who is the fountain of honour; but if he break out of that subordination, and become a competitor, or

[o] Quanto excellentius in mandatis Deo quique proficiunt, tanto majores habent causas formidinis et tremoris; ne de ipsis probitatis augmentis, mens sibi conscia, et laudis avida, in superbiæ rapiatur excessus, et fiat immunda vanitate, dum sibi videtur clara virtute.—*Prosp. Epist. ad Demetr.* Superbia est inordinatus amor excellentiæ propriæ, &c. Consistit primo in hypocrisi, quæ est pessima species superbiæ, et religiosos nostros sæpe consequitur, cum non præsumerent superaddere traditiones supra evangelium, quæ communiter sunt contraria 'rationi, nisi hypocrisi laborarent.—*Wickliffe Trialog.* lib. iii. cap. 10. pp. 60, 61.

will assume and arrogate honour to himself, he will find this prove the falling way. A man that is swelled in a dropsy with wind or water, is as far from a sound, well-fleshed constitution, as he that is in a consuming atrophy. Well, then, art thou a man of worth in thine own eyes, and very tender of thine esteem with others? Art thou one that much valuest the applause of the people, and feelest thy heart tickled with delight when thou hearest of thy great esteem with men, and much dejected when thou hearest that men slight thee? Dost thou love those best who highly honour thee, and doth thy heart bear a grudge at those that thou thinkest do undervalue thee, and entertain mean thoughts of thee, though they be otherwise men of godliness and honesty? [p] Art thou one that must needs have thy humours fulfilled, and thy judgment must be a rule to the judgments of others, and thy word a law to all about thee? Art thou ready to quarrel with every man that lets fall a word in derogation from thy honour? [q] Are thy passions kindled if thy word or will be crossed? Art thou ready to judge humility to be sordid baseness, and knowest not how to stoop and submit; and wilt not be brought to shame thyself by humble confession when thou hast sinned against God, or injured thy brother? Art thou one that honourest the godly that are rich, and thinkest thyself somebody if they value and own thee, but lookest strangely at the godly poor, and art almost ashamed to be their companion? Art thou one that canst not serve God in a low place as well as in a high; and thinkest thyself the fittest for offices and honours, and lovest God's service when it stands with

[p] Clemens. Alexand. Stromat. lib. ii. citeth Barnabas the apostle saying, Woe to them that are understanding in their own conceit, and knowing men in their own eyes.

[q] Sive in lapsu diaboli, sive in prevaricatione hominis, Initium peccati superbia est; quæ congruenter et avaritia nominatur, quia utraque appellatio eum significat appetitum qui et suam mensuram concupiscat excedere, et non dignetur dives esse nisi propriis: tanquam habeat hoc simile Deo, ut honorum suorum ipse sibi sit fons, ipse sibi copia.—*Prosper, in Epistol. ad Demetr.* Seneca 'De Ira,' lib. iii. cap. 22, writes of Antigonus, that hearing two of his servants without his tent speaking against him, he softly calls to them, saying, "Go further off lest the king hear you." And when he heard some of his soldiers, when they stuck in the dirt, cursing the king that brought them a march, he went and helped out them that were in the most danger; and when he had done, said, "Now curse Antigonus that led you into the quicksand, but thank him that helped you out." It is a shame that a heathen king can bear an ill word, better than a mean inferior Christian. Nemo pluris æstimavit virtutem, quam qui boni viri famam perdidit; ne conscientiam perderet; ut Seneca admodum theologice.

preferment? Hast thou thine eye and thy speech much on thy own deservings; and are thy boastings restrained more by wit than by humility?[r] Dost thou delight in opportunities of setting forth thy parts, and lovest to have thy name made public to the world, and wouldst fain leave behind thee some monument of thy worth, that posterity may admire thee when thou art dead and gone? Hast thou witty circumlocutions to commend thyself, while thou seemest to abase thyself, and deny thy worth? Dost thou desire to have all men's eyes upon thee, and to hear men observing thee, say, 'This is he?' Is this the end of thy studies and learning, of thy labours and duties, of seeking degrees, and titles, and places, that thou mayest be taken for somebody abroad in the world? Art thou unacquainted with the deceitfulness and wickedness of thy heart; or knowest thyself to be vile only by reading and by hearsay, but not by experience, and feeling of thy vileness? Art thou readier to defend thyself, and maintain thine innocency, than to accuse thyself, or confess thy fault? Canst thou hardly bear a close reproof, and dost digest plain dealing with difficulty and distaste? Art thou readier in thy discourse to teach than to learn, and to dictate to others than to hearken to their instructions? Art thou bold and confident of thy own opinions, and little suspicious of the weakness of thy understanding, but a slighter

[r] Optime Chytræus: Amplum nomen et claritatem popularem in his terris plerique nescimus, antequam pœnitere cœpit, contemnere. Usibus denique edocti cum sevum prælustri fulmen ab arce venit, sero nobis et Christo vivere optamus. Though the saints are thus chosen and approved of God, yet in their own eyes they are nobody, and disapproved: for it is exceeding natural to them, and inseparable, to think humbly of themselves, as being nothing, &c. For grace teacheth those that are such, to account themselves as nothing worth, and naturally they repute themselves contemptible and dishonourable. When therefore they are excellent with God, with themselves they are not so. And when they are in progress in the knowledge of God, they are to themselves as if they were ignorant of all things; and when with God they are rich, in their own eyes they are poor. And as Christ overcame the devil by humility, in the form of a servant; so in the beginning the serpent overthrew Adam by arrogancy and loftiness. And even now the same serpent lying hid in the secret corners of the heart, doth by pride destroy and ruin the most Christians, &c.—*Holy Macarius, in Homil. 27.* Some men, void of discretion, when they have got a little comfort or refreshment, and some desires or prayer, begin presently to look high, and to be lifted up with insolency, and to judge others, and by this means they fall into the lowest misery. For the same serpent that overthrew Adam, saying, "Ye shall be as gods," doth now suggest arrogancy into their hearts, saying, 'Thou art now perfect, thou hast enough, thou art rich, thou wantest nothing, thou art blessed.'—*Macarius ubi supra.*

of the judgment of all that are against thee? Is thy spirit more disposed to command and govern, than it is to obey and be ruled by others? Art thou ready to censure the doctrine of thy teachers, the actions of thy rulers, and the persons of thy brethren; and to think, if thou wert a judge, thou wouldst be more just; or, if thou wert a minister, thou wouldst be more fruitful in doctrine, and more faithful in overseeing? Or, if thou hadst the managing of other men's business, thou wouldst have carried it more honestly and wisely? If these symptoms be undeniably in thy heart, beyond doubt thou art a proud person. I will not talk of thy following the fashions, of thy bravery and comportment, thy proud gestures and arrogant speeches, thy living at a rate above thy abilities. Perhaps thy incompetency of estate, or thy competency of wit, may suffice to restrain these unmanly fooleries. Perhaps thou mayest rather seem sordid to others, and to live at a rate below thy worth, and yet, if thou be guilty of the former accusations, be it known to thee thou art a person abominably proud; it hath seized on thy heart, which is the principal fort; there is too much of hell abiding in thee, for thee to have any acquaintance in heaven. Thy soul is too like the devil for thee to have any familiarity with God. A proud man is all in the flesh, and he that will be heavenly must be much in the Spirit. It is likely that the man whom I have here described, hath either will or skill to go out of himself, and out of the flesh, as it were, and out of the world, that so he may have freedom for converse above. A proud man makes himself his God, and admires and sets himself as his idol; how, then, can he have his affections set on God? As the humble, godly man is the zealot in forward worshiping of God, so the ambitious man is the great zealot in idolatry; for what is his ambition but a more hearty and earnest desire after his idol, than the common and calmer idolaters do reach? And can this man possibly have his heart in heaven? It is possible his invention and memory may furnish his tongue both with humble and heavenly expressions, but in his spirit there is no more heaven than there is humility.

I entreat you, readers, be very jealous of your souls in this point.[a] There is nothing in the world will more estrange you

[a] Est aliquid humilitatis miro modo quod sursum facit cor, et est aliquid elationis quod deorsum facit cor! Hoc quidem quasi contrarium videtur, ut elatio sit deorsum, et humilitas sursum: sed pia humilitas facit subditum

from God. I speak the more of it, because it is the most common and dangerous sin in morality, and most promoting the great sin of infidelity. You would little think (yea, and the owners do little think) what humble carriage, what exclaiming against pride, what moanful self-accusings, may stand with this devilish sin of pride. O, Christian, if thou wouldst live continually in the presence of thy Lord, and lie in the dust, he would thence take thee up: descend first with him into the grave, thence thou mayest ascend with him to glory. Learn of him to be meek and lowly, and then thou mayest taste of this rest to thy soul. Thy soul else will be as the troubled sea, still casting out mire and dirt, which cannot rest; and, instead of these sweet delights in God, thy pride will fill thee with perpetual disquietness. It is the humble soul that forgets not God, and God will not forget the humble. (Psalm ix. 12, x. 12.) As he that humbleth himself as a little child, shall hereafter be greatest in the kingdom of God, (Matt. xviiii. 4,) so shall he now be greatest in the foretastes of the kingdom; for, as whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased, so he that humbleth himself shall be, in both these respects, exalted. (Matt. xxiii. 12.) God therefore dwelleth with him that is humble and contrite, to revive the spirit of such with his presence. (Isa. lvii. 15.) I conclude with that counsel of James and Peter, Humble yourselves, therefore, in the sight of the Lord, and he shall now in the spirit lift you up, (Jam. iv. 10,) and in due time shall perfectly exalt you. (1 Pet. v. 6.) And when others are cast down, then shalt thou say, "There is a lifting up, and he shall save the humble person." (Prov. xv. 33; xviii. 22; Job xxii. 29.)

Sect. VI. 6. Another impediment to this heavenly life, is, wilful laziness, and slothfulness of spirit; and I verily think for knowing men, there is nothing hinders more than this.[t] Oh, if it were only the exercise of the body, the moving of the lips, the bending of the knee, then it were an easy work indeed, and men would

superiori; nihil est autem superius Deo, et ideo exaltat humilitas, quia facit subditum Deo. Elatio autem quæ in vitio est, eo ipso quo respuit subjectionem, cadit ab illo, quo non est superius quicquam, et ex hoc erit inferius.—*August. de Civitat.* lib. xiv. cap. 13; Matt. xi. 28, 29; Isa. lvii. 20. Scitum est illud Rabbi Levitæ, Maxime humili spiritu esto; expectatio enim hominis sunt vermes.

[t] One would be holy, but he would not wait too long at the door-posts of God's house, nor lose too many hours in the exercise of his stinted devotions.

as commonly step to heaven as they go a few miles to visit a friend; yea, if it were to spend most of our days in numbering beads, and repeating certain words and prayers, in voluntary humility, and neglecting the body, after the commandments and doctrines of men; (Col. ii. 21—23;) yea, or in the outward part of duties commanded by God, yet it were comparatively easy. Further, if it were only in the exercise of parts and gifts, though we made such performance our daily trade, yet it were easy to be heavenly-minded. But it is a work more difficult than all this to separate thoughts and affections from the world; to force them to a work of so high a nature; to draw forth all our graces in their order, and exercise each on its proper object; to hold them to this till they perceive success, and till the work doth thrive and prosper in their hands. This, this is the difficult task. Reader, heaven is above thee, the way is upwards. Dost thou think, who art a feeble, short-winded sinner, to travel daily this steep ascent without a great deal of labour and resolution? Canst thou get that earthly heart to heaven, and bring that backward mind to God, while thou liest still, and takest thine ease? If lying down at the foot of the hill, and looking toward the top, and wishing we were there, would serve the turn, then we should have daily travellers for heaven. But the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. (Matt. xi. 12.) There must be violence used to get these first fruits, as well as to get the full possession. Dost thou not feel it so, though I should not tell thee? Will thy heart get upwards, except thou drive it? Is it not like a dull and jadish horse, that will go no longer than he feels the spur? Dost thou find it easy to dwell in the delights above? It is true, the work is exceeding sweet, and no condition on earth so desirable; but therefore it is that our hearts are so backward, especially in the beginning, till we are acquainted with it. Oh, how many hundred professors of religion, who can easily bring their hearts to ordinary duties, as reading, hearing, praying, conferring, could never yet in all their lives, bring them, and keep them to a heavenly contem-

Another would be happy; but he would leap into heaven suddenly, not abiding to think of a leisurely towering up thither, by a thousand degrees of ascent, in the slow proficiency of grace. Whereas the great God of heaven, that can do all things in an instant, hath thought good to produce all the effects of natural agency, not without a due succession of time.—*Bishop Hall's Soliloq.* xvi. p. 58.

plation one half hour together! Consider here, reader, as before the Lord, whether this be not thine own case. Thou hast known that heaven is all thy hopes; thou knowest thou must shortly be turned hence, and that nothing below can yield thee rest; thou knowest, also, that a strange heart, a seldom and careless thinking of heaven, can fetch but little comfort thence; and dost thou yet for all this let slip thy opportunities, and lie below in dust, or mere duties, when thou shouldst walk above, and live with God? Dost thou commend the sweetness of a heavenly life, and judge those the excellent Christians that use it; and yet didst never once try it thyself? But as the sluggard that stretched himself on his bed, and cried, 'Oh, that this were working!' so dost thou talk and trifle, and live at thy ease, and say, 'Oh, that I could get my heart to heaven!' This is to lie a-bed and wish, when thou shouldst be up and doing, 'How many a hundred do read books, and hear sermons, in expectation to hear of some easy course, or to meet with a shorter cut to comforts, than ever they are like to find in this world! And if they can hear of none from the preachers of truth, they will snatch it with rejoicing from the teachers of falsehood; and presently applaud the excellency of the doctrine, because it hath fitted their lazy temper, and think there is no other doctrine will comfort the soul, because it will not comfort it with hearing and looking on. They think their venison is best, though accompanied with a lie, because it is the easiest catched, and next at hand, and they think it will procure the chiefest blessing, and so it may, if God be as subject to mistake as blind Isaac. And while they pretend enmity only to the impossibilities of the law, they oppose the easier conditions of the Gospel, and cast off the burden that is light also, and which all must bear that will find rest to their souls; and in my judgment may as fitly be styled enemies to the Gospel,[n] as enemies to the law,

[n] Antinomists. Many are hindered because they refuse to give themselves to prayer or meditation, except they feel themselves brought to it by devotion; and except it be when these duties delight them, and go to their hearts, otherwise all seems to them unprofitable. But these kind of men are like him that, being vexed with cold, will not go to the fire except he be first warm; or like one that is ready to perish with famine, and will not ask meat except he were first satisfied. For why doth a man give himself to prayer and meditation, but that he might be warmed with the fire of divine love; or that he might be filled with the gifts and grace of God? These men are mistaken in thinking the time lost in prayer or meditation, if they be not presently watered with a shower of devotion: for, I answer them, that if they strive as much as

from whence they receive their common title. The Lord of light and Spirit of comfort show these men in time a surer way for lasting comfort. The delusions of many of them are strong, and ungrounded comforts they seem to have store. I can judge it to be of no better a kind, because it comes not in the Scripture way.[x] They will some of them profess, that when they meditate and labour for comfort themselves, they either have none, or at least but human, and of a lower kind; but all the comforts that they own and value, are immediately injected without their pains: so do I expect my comforts to come in, in heaven; but till then, I am glad if they will come with labour, and the Spirit will help me to suck them from the breasts of the promise, and to walk from them daily to the face of God. It was an established law among the Argi, that if a man were perceived to be idle and lazy, he must give an account before the magistrate, how he came by his victuals and maintenance. And surely, when I see these men lazy in the use of God's appointed means for comfort, I cannot but question how they came by their comforts. I would they would examine it thoroughly themselves, for God will require an account of it from them. Idleness, and not improving the truth in painful duty, is the common cause of men's seeking comfort from error; even as the people of Israel, when they had no comfortable answer from God, because of their own sin and neglect, would run to seek it from the idols of the heathens. So, when men were false-hearted to the truth, and the Spirit of truth did deny them comfort, because they denied him sincere obedience, therefore they will seek it from a lying spirit.

A multitude also of professors there are, that come and inquire for marks and signs, How shall I know whether my heart

in them lieth for this, and do their duty, and are in war, and in continual fight against their own thoughts, with displeasure because they depart not, nor suffer them to be quiet: such men for this time are more accepted, than if the heat of devotion had come to them suddenly, without any such conflict; the reason is, because they go to warfare for God, as it were, at their own cost and charges, and serve him with greater labour and pains, &c.—*Gerson, de Monte Contemplationis*, part. iii. p. 396. cap. 43. Read this, you libertines, and learn better the way of devotion from a papist.

[x] Arbitrium voluntatis humanæ nequaquam destruimus, quando Dei gratiam, qua ipsum adjuvatur arbitrium, non superbia negamus ingrata, sed grata potius pietate prædicamus. Nostrum est enim velle, sed voluntas ipsa etiam movetur ut surgat, et sanatur ut valeat, et dilatatur ut capiat, et impletur, ut habeat. Nam nisi nos vellemus, nec nos utique acciperemus ea quæ dantur, nec nos haberemus.—*August. Lib. de Bono Viduitatis*, cap. 17.

be sincere? and they think the bare naming of some mark is enough to discover it; but never bestow one hour in trying themselves by the marks they hear.[y] So here, they ask for directions for a heavenly life; and if the hearing and knowing of these directions will serve, then they will be heavenly Christians; but if we set them to task, and show them their work, and tell them they cannot have these delights on easier terms, then, here they leave us, as the young man left Christ, with sorrow. How our comforts are only in Christ, and yet this labour of ours is necessary thereto, I have showed you already in the beginning of this book, and therefore still refer you thither, when any shall put in that objection. My advice to such a lazy sinner is this: As thou art convict that this work is necessary to thy comfortable living, so resolvedly set upon it; if thy heart draw back, and be undisposed, force it on with the command of reason; and if thy reason begin to dispute the work, force it with producing the command of God; and quicken it up with the consideration of thy necessity, and the other motives before propounded; and let the enforcements that brought thee to the work, be still in thy mind to quicken thee in it: do not let such an incomparable treasure lie before thee, while thou liest still with thy hand in thy bosom: let not thy life be a continual vexation, which might be a continual delightful feasting, and all because thou wilt not be at the pains. When thou hast once tasted of the sweetness of it, and a little used thy heart to the work, thou wilt find the pains thou takest with thy backward flesh, abundantly recompensed in the pleasures of thy spirit. Only sit not still with a disconsolate spirit, while comforts grow before thine eyes, like a man in the midst of a garden of flowers, or delightful meadow, that will not rise to get them, that he may partake of their sweetness. Neither is it a few formal, lazy, running thoughts that will fetch thee this consolation from above, any more than a few lazy, formal words will prevail with God instead of fervent prayer.[z] I know Christ is the fountain, and I know this, as every other gift, is of God; but yet if thou ask my advice, how to obtain these waters of consolation, I must tell thee,

[y] Profluens largiter spiritus nullis finibus premitur, nec coercentibus claustris intra certa notatum spatia frænatur: manat jugiter; exuberat affluenter. Nostrum tantum sitiat pectus et pateat. Quantum illuc fidei capaces afferimus, tantum gratiæ inundantis haurimus.—*Cyprian.* Epist. i. ad Donat. p. 3.

[z] In omni disciplina infirma est artis præceptio sine summa assiduitate exercitationis.—*Cicer. ad Heren.*

There is something also for thee to do: the Gospel hath its conditions and works, though not such impossible ones as the Law;[a] Christ hath his yoke and his burden, though easy, and thou must come to him weary, and take it up, or thou wilt never find rest to thy soul. The well is deep, and thou must get forth this water before thou canst be refreshed and delighted with it. What answer would you give a man that stands by a pump or draw-well, and should ask you, How shall I do to get out the water? Why you must draw it up, or labour at the pump, and that not a motion or two, but you must pump till it comes, and then hold on till you have enough. Or, if a man were lifting at a heavy weight, or would move a stone to the top of a mountain, and should ask you, How he should get it up? Why what should you say, but that he must put to his hands, and put forth his strength; and what else can I say to you, in directing you to this art of a heavenly life, but this: You must deal roundly with your hearts, and drive them up, and spur them on, and follow them close till the work be done, as a man will do a lazy, unfaithful servant, who will do nothing longer than your eye is on him; or as you will your horse or ox at his labour, who will not stir any longer than he is driven: and if your heart lie down in the midst of the work, force it up again till the work be done, and let it not prevail by its lazy policies. I know so far as you are spiritual, you need not all this striving and violence, but that is but in part, and in part you are carnal; and as long as it is so, there is no talk of ease. Though your renewed nature do delight in this work, yea, no delight on earth so great, yet your nature, so far as it is fleshly and unrenewed, will draw back and resist, and necessitate your industry. It was the Parthians' custom, that none must give their children any meat in the morning, before they saw the sweat on their faces with some labour: and you shall find this to be God's most usual course, not to give his children the tastes of his delights, till they begin to sweat in seeking after them.[b] Therefore lay them both together,

[a] If therefore they take away the positive law, it must needs follow that every one be led by his own lust, and obey his pleasures, and neglect that which is right and honest, and despise God, and being without fear, will be both ungodly and unjust, as having forsaken the truth.—*Clem. Alexand. Stromat.* lib. ii. paulo post init.

[b] Quid est enim quod cum labore meminimus, sine labore obliviscimur? cum labore discimus, sine labore nescimus? cum labore strenui, sine labore inertes sumus? nonne hinc apparet in quid velut pondere suo proclivis, et prona sit vitiosa natura, et quanta ope ut hinc liberetur indigeat?—*Aug. de Civit.* lib. xxii. p. 22.

and judge whether a heavenly life or thy carnal ease be better, and, as a wise man, make thy choice accordingly. Yet this let me say to encourage thee, Thou needest not expend thy thoughts more than now thou dost; it is but only to employ them better: I press thee not to busy thy mind much more than thou dost, but to busy it upon better and more pleasant objects. As Socrates said to a lazy fellow that would fain go up to Olympus, but that it was so far off; "Why," saith he, "walk but as far every day as thou dost up and down about thy house, and in so many days thou wilt be at Olympus."[e] So say I to thee; Employ but so many serious thoughts every day upon the excellent glory of the life to come, as thou now employest on thy necessary affairs in the world; nay, as thou daily losest on vanities and impertinencies, and thy heart will be at heaven in a very short space.

To conclude this, As I have seldom known Christians perplexed with doubts about their state for want of knowing right evidences to try by, so much as for want of skill and diligence in using them; so have I seldom known a Christian that wants the joys of this heavenly life, for want of being told the means to get it, but for want of a heart to set upon the work, and painfully to use the means they are directed to. It is the field of the slothful that is overgrown with weeds, (Prov. xxiv. 30—34;) and the desire of the slothful killeth his joys, because his hands refuse to labour; (Prov. xxi. 25.) While he lies wishing, his soul lies starving. He saith, There is a lion (there is difficulty) in the way, and turneth himself on the bed of his ease, as a door turneth on the hinges: he hideth his hand in his bosom, and it grieveth him to bring it to his mouth, (Prov. xxvi. 13—15,) though it be to feed himself with the food of life. What is this but despising the feast prepared, and setting light by the dear-bought pleasures; and consequently by the precious blood that bought them, and throwing away our own consolations? For the Spirit hath told us, "that he also that is slothful in his work, is brother to him that is a great waster." (Prov. xviii. 9.) Apply this to thy spiritual work, and study well the meaning of it.

Sect. VII. 7. It is also a dangerous and secret hinderance to content ourselves with the mere preparatives to this heavenly life, while we are utter strangers to the life itself. When we take up with the mere studies of heavenly things, and the no-

[e] Erasm. Apoth. lib. iii.

tions and thoughts of them in our brain, or the talking of them with one another, as if this were all that makes us heavenly people: there is none in more danger of this snare than those that are much in public duty, especially preachers of the Gospel. Oh, how easily may they be deceived here, while they do nothing more than read of heaven, and study of heaven, and preach of heaven, and pray and talk of heaven. What! is not this the heavenly life? O that God would reveal to our hearts the dangers of this snare! Alas! all this is but mere preparation; this is not the life we speak of, but it is indeed a necessary help hereto. I entreat every one of my brethren in the ministry, that they search and watch against this temptation: alas! this is but gathering the materials, and not the erecting of the building itself; this is but gathering our manna for others, and not eating and digesting ourselves; as he that sits at home may study geography, and draw most exact descriptions of countries, and yet never see them, nor travel toward them; so may you describe to others the joys of heaven, and yet never come near it in your own hearts: as a man may tell others of the sweetness of meat which he never tasted, or as a blind man by learning may dispute of light and of colours; so may you study and preach most heavenly matter, which yet never sweetened your own spirits; and set forth to others that heavenly light, wherewith your own souls were never enlightened; and bring that fire for the hearts of your people, that never once warmed your own hearts.[d] If you should study of nothing but heaven while you lived, and preach of nothing but heaven to your people, yet might your own hearts be strangers to it. What heavenly passages had Balaam in his prophecies! yet little of it (it is likely) in his spirit. Nay, we are under a more subtile temptation than any other men, to draw us from this heavenly life: if our employments did lie at a great distance from heaven, and did take up our thoughts upon worldly things, we should not be so apt to be so contented and deluded; but when we find ourselves employed upon nothing else, we are easier drawn to take up here. Studying and preaching of heaven is liker to a heavenly life, than thinking and talking of the world is, and the likeness is it that is like to deceive us: this is to die the most miserable death, even to famish ourselves, because we have bread on our tables, which is worse than to famish when we cannot get it; and to

[d] Verissimum istud Senecæ Apothegma, Nullus pejus mereri de omnibus mortalibus judico, quàm qui aliter vivunt quàm vivendum præcipiunt.

die for thirst while we draw waters for others; thinking it enough that we have daily to do with it, though we never drink it to our souls' refreshing. All that I will say to you more of this, shall be in the words of my godly and judicious friend[e] Mr. George Abbot, which I shall transcribe, lest you have not the book at hand, in his 'Vindiciæ Sabbathi,' pp. 147—149.

"And here let me, in a holy jealousy, annex an exhortation to some of the ministers of this land, (for, blessed be God, it needs not to all,) that they would carefully provide, and look that they do not build the tabernacle on the Lord's-day; I mean, that they rest not in the *opus operatum* of their holy employments, and busying themselves about the carnal part of holy things, in putting off the studying of their sermons, or getting them by heart, (except it be to work them upon the heart, and not barely commit them to memory,) till that day; and so, though they take care to build the tabernacle of God's church, yet they in the mean time neglect the temple of their own hearts in serving God in the spirit, and not in the letter or outward performance only: but it were well if they would gather and prepare their manna, seethe it, and break it the day before, that when the sabbath comes they might have nothing to do but to chew and concoct it into their own spirits, and so spiritually, in the experience of their own hearts (not heads), dish it out to their hearers, which would be a happy means to make them see better fruit of their labours; for commonly that which is notionally delivered, is notionally received; and that which is spiritually and powerfully delivered in the evidence of the Spirit, is spiritually and savingly received; for spirit begets spirit, as fire begets fire, &c. It is an easy thing to take great pains in the outward part or performance of holy things, which oft proves a snare, causing the neglect of the spirit of the inner man; for many are great labourers in the work of the Lord, that are starvelings in the spirit of the Lord, satisfying themselves in a popish peace of conscience in the deed-doing, instead of joy in the Holy Ghost; bringing, indeed, meat to their guests, but through haste or laziness, eating none themselves; or, like tailors, make clothes for other men to wear; so they, never assaying their own points how they fit, or may suit with their own spirits, but think it is their duty to teach, and other men's duty to do." So far the author.

[e] Who died, as I understand since, about the hour that I was preaching these words, or very near.

CHAP. V.

Some General Helps to a Heavenly Life.

SECT. I. Having thus showed thee the blocks in thy way, and told thee what hinderances will resist thee in the work, I shall now lay thee down some positive helps, and conclude with a directory to the main duty itself.[f] But first, I expect that thou resolve against the forementioned impediments, that thou read them seriously, and avoid them faithfully, or else thy labour will be all in vain; thou dost but go about to reconcile light and darkness, Christ and Belial, and to conjoin heaven and hell in thy spirit: thou mayest sooner bring down heaven to earth, than do this. I must tell thee also, that I expect thy promise, faithfully to set upon the helps which I shall prescribe thee, and that the reading of them will not bring heaven into thy heart, but in their constant practice the Spirit will do it. It were better for thee I had never written them, and thou hadst never seen this book, nor read them, if thou do not buckle thyself to the duty.

As thou valuest, then, the delights of these foretastes of heaven, make conscience of performing these following duties:

Sect. II. 1. Know heaven to be the only treasure, and labour to know also what a treasure it is. Be convinced once that thou hast no other happiness, and then be convinced what happiness is there. If thou do not soundly believe it to be the chiefest good, thou wilt never set thy heart upon it; and this conviction must sink into thy affections; for if it be only a notion, it will have little operation. And surely we have reason enough to be easily convinced of this, as you may see in what hath been spoken already. Read over the description and nature of this rest, in the beginning of this book, and the reasons against thy resting below, in chapter first, and conclude that this is the only happiness. As long as your judgments do undervalue it, your affections must needs be cold towards it. If your judgments do mistake blear-eyed Leah for beautiful Rachel, so will your affections also mistake them. If Eve do once suppose she sees more worth in the forbidden fruit than in the love and fruition of God, no wonder if it have more of her heart than God. If your judgments once prefer the delights of the flesh before the delights in the presence of God, it is impossible, then, your

[f] Read Perkins' 'Cases of Conscience,' lib. i. cap. 9.

hearts should be in heaven. As it is the ignorance of the emptiness of things below that makes men so overvalue them; so it is ignorance of the high delights above, which is the cause that men so little mind them. If you see a purse of gold, and believe it to be but stones or counters, it will not entice your affections to it. It is not a thing's excellency in itself, but it is excellency known that provokes desire. If an ignorant man see a a book containing the secrets of arts or sciences, yet he values it no more than a common piece, because he knows not what is in it: but he that knows it, doth highly value it; his very mind is set upon it, he can pore upon it day and night, he can forbear his meat, and drink, and sleep, to read it. As the Jews inquired after Elias, when Christ tells them that verily Elias is already come, and ye knew him not, but did unto him whatsoever he listed; (Matt. xvii. 11, 12;) so men inquire after happiness and delight, when it is offered to them in the promise of rest, and they know it not, but trample it under foot; and as the Jews killed the Messiah, while they waited for the Messiah, and that because they did not know him, (John i. 10; Acts xiii. 27;) for had they known him, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory; (1 Cor. ii. 8;) so doth the world cry out for rest, and busily seek for delight and happiness, even while they are neglecting and destroying their rest and happiness, and this because they thoroughly know it not; for did they know thoroughly what it is, they could not so slight the everlasting treasure.

Sect. III. 2. Labour as to know heaven to be the only happiness, so also to be thy happiness. Though the knowledge of excellency and suitableness may stir up that love which worketh by desire; yet there must be the knowledge of our interest or propriety, to the setting a-work of our love of complacency. We may confess heaven to be the best condition, though we despair of enjoying it; and we may desire and seek it, if we see the obtainment to be but probable and hopeful: but we can never delightfully rejoice in it, till we are somewhat persuaded of our title to it. What comfort is it to a man that is naked, to see the rich attire of others; or, to a man that hath not a bit to put in his mouth, to see a feast which he must not taste of? What delight hath a man that hath not a house to put his head in, to see sumptuous buildings of others? Would not all this rather increase his anguish, and make him more sensible of his own misery? So, for a man to know the excellences of hea-

ven, and not to know whether he shall ever enjoy them, may well raise desire, and provoke to seek it, but it will raise but little joy and content. Who will set his heart on another man's possessions? If your house, your goods, your cattle, your children were not your own, you would less mind them, and delight less in them. O, therefore, Christians, rest not till you can call this rest your own; sit not down without assurance; get alone, and question with thyself; bring thy heart to the bar of trial; force it to answer the interrogatories put to it; set the conditions of the Gospel and qualifications of the saints on one side, and thy performance of those conditions and the qualifications of thy soul on the other side, and then judge how near they resemble. Thou hast the same word before thee, to judge thyself by now, by which thou must be judged at the great day; thou art there before told the questions that must then be put to thee. Put these questions now to thyself. Thou mayest there read the very articles upon which thou shalt be tried. Why, try thyself by those articles now. Thou mayest there know beforehand, on what terms men shall be then acquitted and condemned; why, try now whether thou art possessed of that which will acquit thee, or whether thou be upon the same terms with those that must be condemned, and accordingly acquit or condemn thyself. Yet, be sure thou judge by a true touchstone, and mistake not the Scripture description of a saint, that thou neither acquit nor condemn thyself upon mistakes: for, as groundless hopes do tend to confusion, and are the greatest cause of most men's damnation; so groundless doubtings do tend to discomforts, and are the great cause of the disquieting of the saints. Therefore lay thy grounds of trial safely and advisedly: proceed in the work deliberately and methodically: follow it to an issue resolutely and industriously: suffer not thy heart to give thee the slip, and get away before a judgment, but make it stay to hear its sentence: if once, or twice, or thrice, will not do it, nor a few days of hearing bring it to issue, follow it on with unwearied diligence, and give not over till the work be done, and till thou canst say knowingly off or on, either thou art, or art not a member of Christ: either that thou hast, or that thou hast not yet title to this rest. Be sure thou rest not in wilful uncertainties. If thou canst not despatch the work well thyself, get the help of those that are skilful. Go to thy minister, if he be a man of experience; or go to some able, experienced friend; open thy case faithfully, and wish them to deal plainly; and thus continue

till thou hast got assurance: not but some doubtings may still remain; but yet thou mayest have so much assurance as to master them, that they may not much interrupt thy peace. If men did know heaven to be their own inheritance, we should less need to persuade their thoughts unto it, or to press them to set their delight in it. Oh! if men did truly know that God is their own Father, and Christ their own Redeemer and Head, and that those are their own everlasting habitations, and that there it is that they must abide and be happy for ever; how could they choose but be ravished with the forethoughts thereof! If a Christian could but look upon sun, and moon, and stars, and reckon all his own in Christ, and say, 'These are the portion that my Husband doth bestow; these are the blessings that my Lord hath procured me, and things incomparably greater than these;' what holy raptures would his spirit feel! The more do they sin against their own comforts, as well as against the grace of the Gospel, who are wilful maintainers of their own doubtings, and plead for their unbelief, and cherish distrustful thoughts of God, and scandalous, injurious thoughts of their Redeemer: who represent the covenant, as if it were of works and not of grace; and represent Christ as an enemy rather than as a Saviour, as if he were glad of advantages against them, and were willing that they should keep off from him, and die in their unbelief; when he hath called them so oft, and invited them so kindly, and borne the hell that they should bear. Ah! wretches that we are, that be keeping up jealousies of the love of our Lord, when we should be rejoicing and bathing our souls in his love; that can question that love which hath been so fully evidenced; and doubt still whether he that hath stooped so low, and suffered so much, and taken up a nature and office on purpose, be yet willing to be theirs, who are willing to be his; as if any man could choose Christ before Christ hath chosen him, or any man could desire to have Christ more than Christ desires to have him, or any man were more willing to be happy than Christ is to make him happy. Fie upon these injurious, if not blasphemous thoughts! If ever thou have harboured such thoughts in thy breast; or if ever thou have uttered such words with thy tongue, spit out that venom, vomit out that rancour, cast them from thee, and take heed how thou ever entertainest them more! God hath written the names of his people in heaven, as you use to write your names in your own books, or upon your goods, or set your marks on your own sheep: and shall we be attempting to raze

them out, and to write our names on the doors of hell? But blessed be our God, whose foundation is sure, (2 Tim. ii. 19,) and who keepeth us by his mighty power through faith unto salvation. (1 Peter i. 5.) Well, then, this is my second advice to thee, that thou follow on the work of self-examination, till thou hast got assurance that this rest is thy own; and this will draw thy heart unto it, and feed thy spirits with fresh delights, which else will be but tormented so much the more, to think that there is such rest for others, but none for thee.

Sect. IV. 3. Another help to sweeten thy soul with the foretastes of rest, is this, Labour to apprehend how near it is, think seriously of its speedy approach.[s] That which we think is near at hand, we are more sensible of than that which we behold at a distance. When we hear of war or famine in another country, it troubleth us not so much; or if we hear it prophesied of a long time hence: so if we hear of plenty a great way off, or of a golden age that shall fall out who knows when, this never rejoiceth us. But if judgments or mercies begin to draw near, then they affect us. If we were sure we should see the golden age, then it would take with us. When the plague is in a town but twenty miles off, we do not fear it; nor much, perhaps, if it be in another street; but if once it come to the next door, or if it seize on one in our own family, then we begin to think on it more feelingly. It is so with mercies as well as judgments. When they are far off, we talk of them as marvels; but when they draw close to us, we rejoice in them as truths. This makes men think on heaven so insensibly, because they conceit it at too great a distance. They look on it as twenty, or thirty, or forty years off; and this is it that dulls their sense. As wicked men are fearless and senseless of judgment, because the sentence is not speedily executed; (Eccles. viii. 11;) so are the godly deceived of their comforts, by supposing them farther off than they are. This is the danger of putting the day of death far from us, when men will promise themselves longer time in the world than God hath promised them, and judge of the length of their lives by the probabilities they gather from their age, their health, their constitution and temperature: this makes them look at heaven as a great way off. If the rich fool in the Gospel had not expected to have lived many years, he would surely have thought more of providing for eternity, and less of his present store and possessions: (Luke xii. 17—20;) and if we did not think of staying many years from

[s] Vita optime instituitur, cum quispiam mortuis concolor sit, ut Zeno.

heaven, we should think on it with far more piercing thoughts. This expectation of long life, doth both the wicked and the godly a great deal of wrong. How much better were it to receive the sentence of death in ourselves, and to look on eternity as near at hand! (2 Cor. i. 8—10.) Surely, reader, thou standest at the door; and hundreds of diseases are ready waiting to open the door and let thee in. Are not the thirty or forty years of thy life that are past quickly gone? Are they not a very little time when thou lookest back on them, and will not all the rest be shortly so too? Do not days and nights come very thick? Dost thou not feel that building of flesh to shake, and perceive thy house of clay to totter? Look on thy glass, see how it runs; look on thy watch, how fast it getteth. What a short moment is between us and our rest: what a step is it from hence to everlastingness! While I am thinking and writing of it, it hasteth near, and I am even entering into it before I am aware. While thou art reading this it posteth on, and thy life will be gone as a tale that is told. Mayest thou not easily foresee thy dying time, and look upon thyself as ready to depart? It is but a few days till thy friends shall lay thee in the grave, and others do the like for them. If you verily believed you should die to-morrow, how seriously would you think of heaven to-night! The condemned prisoner knew before that he must die, and yet he was then as jovial as any; but when he hears the sentence, and knows he hath not a week to live, then how it sinks his heart within him: so that the true apprehension of the nearness of eternity doth make men's thoughts of it be quick and piercing, and put life into their fears and sorrows, if they are unfitted, and into their desires and joys, if they have assurance of its glory.[h] When the witch's Samuel had told Saul, By to-morrow this time thou shalt be with me, (1 Sam. xxviii. 19,) this quickly worked to his very heart, and laid him down as dead on the earth. And if Christ should say to a believing soul, 'By to-morrow this time thou shalt be with me,' this would be a working word, indeed, and would bring him in spirit to heaven before. As Melancthon was

[h] There is a great Arbiter of all things, that can thunder the proud emperor under his bed, and write the great king at three or four words into trembling; that can send a fly to fetch the triple crown before his tribunal; and make a hair, or the kernel of a raisin, as mortal as Goliah's spear; that can unspeak the whole world into nothing, and blow down a great bubble with an easy breath; that by drawing one nail, can throw down the stateliest building; and undress your souls, by unpinning one pin, &c.—*Mr. Vines' Essex Hearse*, p. 12.

wont to say of his uncertain station, because of the persecution of his enemies, "Ego jam sum hic, Dei beneficio, 40 annos, et nunquam potui dicere aut certus esse, me per unam septimanam mansuram esse;" i. e. I have now been here these forty years, and yet could never say, or be sure, that I shall tarry here for one week: so may we all say of our abode on earth. As long as thou hast continued out of heaven, thou canst not say thou shalt be out of it one week longer. Do but suppose that you are still entering in it, and you shall find it will much help you more seriously to mind it.

Sect. V. 4. Another help to this heavenly life, is, to be much in serious discoursing of it, especially with those that can speak from their hearts, and are seasoned themselves with a heavenly nature.[1] It is a pity, saith Mr. Bolton, that Christians should ever meet together without some talk of their meeting in heaven, or the way to it, before they part; it is a pity so much precious time is spent among Christians in vain discourses, foolish janglings, and useless disputes, and not a sober word of heaven among them. Methinks we should meet together of purpose to warm our spirits with discoursing of our rest. To hear a minister, or other private Christian, set forth that blessed, glorious state, with power and life from the promises of the Gospel, methinks should make us say, as the two disciples, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he was opening to us the Scripture?" (Luke xxiv. 32,) while he was opening to us the windows of heaven? If a Felix, or wicked wretch, will tremble, when he hears his judgment powerfully denounced, (Acts xxiv. 25;) why should not the believing soul be revived when he hears his eternal rest revealed? Get then together, fellow Christians, and talk of the affairs of your country and kingdom, and comfort one another with such words. (1 Thess. iv. 18.) If worldlings get together, they will be talking of the world; when wantons are together, they will be talking of their lusts, and wicked men can be delighted in talking of wickedness; and should not Christians, then, delight themselves in talking of Christ; and the heirs of heaven in talking of their inheritance? This may make our hearts revive within us, as it did Jacob's, to hear the message that called him to Goshen, and to see the chariots that should bring him to Jo-

[1] Ego hoc vel præcipuum vitæ meæ officium debere me Deum conscius sum, dum omnis sermo meus et sensus loquatur.—*Hilarius, referente Aquin. cont. Gentil.* lib. i. cap. 2.

seph. Oh that we were furnished with skill and resolution to turn the stream of men's common discourse to these more sublime and precious things; and when men begin to talk of things unprofitable, that we could tell how to put in a word for heaven, and say, as Peter, of his bodily food, "Not so, for I eat not that which is common and unclean," (Acts x. 14,) this is nothing to my eternal rest. Oh, the good that we might both do and receive by this course! If it had not been needful to deter us from unfruitful conference, Christ would not have talked of giving an account of every idle word at judgment; (Matt. xii. 36;) say then, as David, when you are in conference, "Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chiefest mirth;" (Psal. cxxxvii. 5, 6;) and then you shall find the truth of that, "A wholesome tongue is a tree of life." (Prov. xv. 4.)

Sect VI. 5. Another help to this heavenly life is this, Make it thy business in every duty to wind up thy affections nearer heaven. A man's attainments and receivings from God are answerable to his own desires and ends; that which he sincerely seeks he finds; God's end in the institution of his ordinances was, that they be as so many stepping-stones to our rest, and as the stairs, by which, in subordination to Christ, we may daily ascend unto it in our affections. Let this be thy end in using them, as it was God's end in ordaining them, and doubtless they will not be unsuccessful: though men be personally far asunder, yet they may even by letters have a great deal of intercourse. How have men been rejoiced by a few lines from a friend, though they could not see him face to face! What gladness have we when we do but read the expressions of his love; or if we read of our friend's prosperity and welfare! Many a one that never saw the fight, hath triumphed and shouted, made bonfires, and rung bells, when they have but heard and read of the victory; and may not we have intercourse with God in his ordinances, though our persons be yet so far remote? May not our spirits rejoice in the reading of those lines which contain our legacy and charter for heaven? With what gladness may we read the expressions of love, and hear of the state of our celestial country! With what triumphant shoutings may we applaud our inheritance, though yet we have not the happiness to behold it! Men that are separated by sea and land, can yet, by the mere intercourse of letters, carry on both great and gainful trades, even to the value

of their whole estate; and may not a Christian, in the wise improvement of duties, drive on this happy trade for rest? Come not, therefore, with any lower ends to duties; renounce formality, customariness, and applause. When thou kneelest down in secret or public prayer, let it be in hope to get thy heart nearer God before thou risest off thy knees. When thou openest thy Bible, or other books, let it be with this hope, to meet with some passage of divine truth, and some such blessings of the Spirit with it, as may raise thine affections nearer heaven, and give thee a fuller taste thereof. When thou art setting thy foot out of thy door, to go to the public ordinance and worship, say, 'I hope to meet with somewhat from God, that may raise my affections before I return; I hope the Spirit will give me the meeting, and sweeten my heart with those celestial delights; I hope that Christ will appear to me in the way, shine about me with light from heaven, and let me hear his instructing and reviving voice, and cause the scales to fall from mine eyes, that I may see more of that glory than ever I yet saw; I hope, before I return to my house, my Lord will take my heart in hand, and bring it within the view of rest, and set it before his Father's presence, that I may return, as the shepherds, from the heavenly vision, glorifying and praising God for all the things I have heard and seen, (Luke ii. 20,) and say, as those that beheld his miracles, "We have seen strange things to day." (Luke v. 26.) Remember also to pray for thy teacher, that God would put some divine message into his mouth, which may leave a heavenly relish on thy spirit.

If these were our ends, and this our course, when we set to duty, we should not be so strange as we are to heaven.

When the Indians first saw the use of letters by our English, they thought there was surely some spirit in them, that men should converse together by a paper. If Christians would take this course in their duties, they might come to such a holy fellowship with God, and see so much of the mysteries of the kingdom, that it would make the standers-by admire what is in those lines, what is in that sermon, what is in this praying, that fills his heart so full of joy, and that so transports him above himself. Certainly, God would not fail us in our duties, if we did not fail ourselves, and then experience would make them sweeter to us.

Sect. VII. 6. Another help is this, Make an advantage of every object thou seest, and of every passage of Divine Providence,

and of every thing that befalls in thy labour and calling, to mind thy soul of its approaching rest. As all providences and creatures are means to our rest, so do they point us to that as their end. Every creature hath the name of God, and of our final rest, written upon it, which a considerate believer may as truly discern, as he can read upon a post or hand, in a cross-way, the name of the town or city which it points to. This spiritual use of creatures and providences is God's great end in bestowing them on man; and he that overloooks this end must needs rob God of his chiefest praise, and deny him the greatest part of his thanks. The relation that our present mercies have to our great eternal mercies, is the very quintessence and spirits of all these mercies; therefore do they lose the very spirits of all their mercies, and take nothing but the husks and bran, who do overlook this relation, and draw not forth the sweetness of it in their contemplations. God's sweetest dealings with us at the present would not be half so sweet as they are if they did not intimate some further sweetness. As ourselves have a fleshly and a spiritual substance, so have our mercies a fleshly and a spiritual use, and are fitted to the nourishing of both our parts. He that receives the carnal part, and no more, may have his body comforted by them, but not his soul. It is not all one to receive sixpence merely as sixpence, and to receive it in earnest of a thousand pounds; though the sum be the same, yet surely the relation makes a wide difference. Thou takest but the bare earnest, and overlookest the main sum, when thou receivest thy mercies, and forgettest thy crown. Oh, therefore, that Christians were skilled in this art! You can open your Bibles, and read there of God and of glory; oh, learn to open the creatures, and to open the several passages of providence, to read of God and glory there. Certainly, by such a skilful, industrious improvement, we might have a fuller taste of Christ and heaven in every bit of bread that we eat, and in every draught of beer we drink, than most men have in the use of the sacrament. If thou prosper in the world, and thy labour succeed, let it make thee more sensible of thy perpetual prosperity: if thou be weary of thy labours, let it make thy thoughts of rest more sweet: if things go cross and hard with thee in the world, let it make thee the more earnestly desire that day when all thy sorrows and sufferings shall cease.[k] Is thy body refreshed

[k] Socrates, quum ex urbe Allina in vicinos agros, longe amœnissimos, invitaretur, fertur respondisse, Id sibi non esse integrum quia sit discendi cupi-

with food or sleep? remember the inconceivable refreshings with Christ. Dost thou hear any news that makes thee glad? remember what glad tidings it will be to hear the sound of the trump of God, and the absolving sentence of Christ, our Judge. Art thou delighting thyself in the society of the saints? remember the everlasting amiable fraternity thou shalt have with perfected saints in rest. Is God communicating himself to thy spirit? why, remember the time of thy highest advancement, when thy joy shall be full, as thy communion is full. Dost thou hear the raging noise of the wicked, and the disorders of the vulgar, and the confusions of the world like the noise in a cloud, or the roaring of the waters? why think of the blessed agreement in heaven, and the melodious harmony in that choir of God. Dost thou hear or feel the tempest of wars, or see any cloud of blood arising? remember the day when thou shalt be housed with Christ, where there is nothing but calmness and amiable union, and where we shall solace ourselves in perfect peace, under the wings of the Prince of Peace for ever. Thus you may see, what advantages to a heavenly life every condition and creature doth afford us, if we had but hearts to apprehend and improve them. As it is said of the Turks, that they will make bridges of the dead bodies of their men, to pass over the trenches or ditches in their way; so might Christians of the very ruins and calamities of the times, and of every dead body or misery that they see, make a bridge for the passage of their thoughts to their rest. And as they have taught their pigeons, which they call carriers, in divers places, to bear letters of intercourse

dus; homines verò, non arbores docere. Equidem Socrati id laudi vertendum ideo existimarem, quia publici boni causa frequenter conspiciebatur in publico, et alios docendo meliores efficere: et dictis ac factis prodesse omnibus, obesse nemini, studio illi erat. Sed tamen et illud fatendum, natura rerum considerationem quasi quendam ducem esse ad Dei conditoris, voluntatisque ejus agnitionem.—*Jac. Grynæus in Prefat. ante Comment. in Hebr.* Nam cum oculi idcirco dati sunt corpori, ut per eos, intueamur creaturam, ac per hujusmodi mirabilem harmoniam agnoscamus opificem: auresque itidem ut per eas eloquia divina et Dei leges audiamus; anima relicta bonorum speculatione, agilitate motus sui, ad illa jam quæ sunt contraria, movetur errans. —*Athanasius in lib.* i. *contra Gentil.* Experto crede, aliquid amplius invenires in sylvis, quam in angulis. Ligna et lapides docebunt te, quod à magistris audire non possis, inquit vir contemplativus Bernardus, referente Grynæo, ubi supra. Augustinus pie dixit, Creaturarum species, sunt quædam voces laudantium Deum: præstat non earum concentum, quam ἀσυμφωνίαν impiorum quorundam hominum attente audire. Testantur illæ, Deum summum bonum sapientem, et hominum amantem; omnia condidisse, et tantisper dum eidem visum est, conservare, ut hominum usibus, et opificis gloriæ inserviant.—*Ibid.*

from friend to friend, at very great distance, so might a wise, industrious Christian get his thoughts carried into heaven, and receive, as it were, returns from thence again by creatures of slower wing than doves, by the assistance of the Spirit, the Dove of God. This is the right Dedalian flight; and thus we may take from each bird a feather, and make us wings, and fly to Christ.

Sect. VIII. 7. Another singular help is this; Be much in that angelical work of praise. As the most heavenly spirits will have the most heavenly employment, so the more heavenly the employment, the more will it make the spirit heavenly. Though the heart be the fountain of all our actions, and the actions will be usually of the quality of the heart, yet do those actions, by a kind of reflection, work much on the heart from whence they spring: the like also may be said of our speeches. So that the work of praising God, being the most heavenly work, is likely to raise us to the most heavenly temper. This is the work of those saints and angels, and this will be our everlasting work. If we were more taken up in this employment now, we should be liker to what we shall be then. When Aristotle was asked what he thought of music, he answers, "Jovem neque canere, neque citharam pulsare;" that Jupiter did never sing, nor play on the harp, thinking it an unprofitable art to men, which was no more delightful to God. But Christians may better argue from the like ground, that singing of praise is a most profitable duty, because it is so delightful, as it were, to God himself, that he hath made it his people's eternal work; for they shall sing the song of Moses, and the song of the Lamb. As desire, and faith, and hope, are of shorter continuance than love and joy, so also preaching, and prayer, and sacraments, and all means for confirmation, and expression of faith and hope, shall cease, when our thanks, and praise, and triumphant expressions of love and joy, shall abide for ever. The liveliest emblem of heaven that I know upon earth, is, when the people of God, in the deep sense of his excellency and bounty, from hearts abounding with love and joy, do join together, both in heart and voice, in the cheerful and melodious singing of his praises. Those that deny the lawful use of singing the Scripture-psalms in our times, do disclose their unheavenly, inexperienced hearts, I think, as well as their ignorant understandings. Had they felt the heavenly delights that many of their brethren in such duties have felt, I think they would have been of another mind. And whereas

they are wont to question whether such delights be genuine, or any better than carnal or delusive; surely, the very relish of God and heaven that is in them, the example of the saints in Scripture, whose spirits have been raised by the same duty, and the command of Scripture for the use of this means, one would think, should quickly decide the controversy. And a man may as truly say of these delights, as they use to say of the testimony of the Spirit, that they witness themselves to be of God, and bring the evidence of their heavenly parentage along with them. And whereas they allow only extemporate psalms, immediately dictated to them by the Spirit,[1] when I am convinced that the gift of extemporate singing is so common to the church, that any man who is spiritually merry can use it, (James v. 13,) and when I am convinced that the use of Scripture-psalms is abolished or prohibited, then I shall more regard their judgment. Certainly, as large as mine acquaintance hath been with men of this spirit, I never yet heard any of them sing a psalm extempore, that was better than David's; yea, or that was tolerable to a judicious hearer, and not rather a shame to himself and his opinion. But sweet experience will be a powerful argument, and will teach the sincere Christian to hold fast his exercise of this soul-raising duty.

Little do we know how we wrong ourselves, by shutting out of our prayers the praises of God, or allowing them so narrow a room as we usually do, while we are copious enough in our confessions and petitions. Reader, I entreat thee, remember this: Let praises have a larger room in thy duties; keep ready at hand matter to feed thy praise, as well as matter for confession and petition. To this end, study the excellences and goodness of the Lord, as frequently as thy own necessities and vileness; study the mercies which thou hast received, and which are promised; both their own proper worth and their aggravating circumstances, as often as thou studiest the sins thou hast committed. Oh, let God's praise be much in your mouths, for in the mouths of the upright, his praise is comely. (Psal. xxxiii. 1.)

[1] Scio tamen quod etiam temporibus Tertul. hoc in ecclesiis post cœnas dilectionis fuisse usitatum, in imitationem, viz., ecclesiæ apostolicæ, quàm dona extraordinaria nondum cessavere. Sic Tertul. Apologet. cap. 39. Post aquam manualem et lumina, ut quisque de Scripturis Sanctis vel de proprio ingenio potest, provocatur in medium Deo canere. Hinc probatur quomodo biberit. Vid. etiam Epiphan. sub finem lib. iii. advers. Heres.; et Plinium Secundum, lib. x. epist. 2; Euseb. Histor. lib. ii. cap. 16, et lib. v. cap. 28; Basil. apud Ruffinum, Hist. Eccles. lib. ii. cap. 9; Athanas. Apolog.

Seven times a day did David praise him. (Psalm cix. 164.) Yea, his praise was continually of him. (Psalm lxxi. 6.) As he that offereth praise glorifieth God, (Psalm l. 23,) so doth he most rejoice and glad his own soul. (Psalm xcviii. 4.) Offer, therefore, the sacrifice of praise continually. (Heb. xiii. 15.) In the midst of the church, let us sing his praise. (Heb. ii. 12.) Praise our God, for he is good; sing praises unto his name, for it is pleasant. (Psalm cxxxv. 3; cxlvii. 1.) Yea, let us rejoice and triumph in his praise. (Psalm cvi. 47.)

Do you think that David had not a most heavenly spirit, who was so much employed in this heavenly work? Doth it not sometime very much raise your hearts, when you do but seriously read that divine song of Moses, Deut. xxxii., and those heavenly iterated praises of David, having almost nothing sometime but praise in his mouth? How much more would it raise and refresh us, to be skilled and accustomed in the work ourselves! I confess, to a man of a languishing body, where the heart doth faint, and the spirits are feeble, the cheerful praising of God is more difficult; because the body is the soul's instrument, and when it lies unstringed, or untuned, the music is likely to be accordingly but dull. Yet a spiritual cheerfulness there may be within, and the heart may praise, if not the voice. But where the body is strong, the spirits lively, and the heart cheerful, and the voice at command, what advantage have such for this heavenly work! With what alacrity and vivacity may they sing forth praises! O the madness of heathful youth, that lay out this vigour of body and mind upon vain delights and fleshly lusts, which is so fit for the noblest work of man! And O the sinful folly of many of the saints, who drench their spirits in continual sadness, and waste their days in complaints and groans, and fill their bodies with wasting diseases, and so make themselves both in body and mind unfit for this sweet and heavenly work! That when they should join with the people of God in his praises, and delight their souls in singing to his name, they are questioning their worthiness, and studying their miseries, or raising scruples about the lawfulness of the duty, and so rob God of his praise, and themselves of their solace. But the greatest destroyer of our comfort in this duty, is our sticking in the carnal delight thereof, and taking up in the tune and melody, and suffering the heart to be all the while idle, which must perform the chiefest part of the work, and which should make use of the melody, for its reviving and exhilarating.

Sect. IX. If thou wouldst have thy heart in heaven, keep thy soul still possessed with true believing thoughts of the exceeding, infinite love of God. Love is the attractive of love.[m] No man's heart will be set upon him that hates him, were he never so excellent, nor much upon him that doth not much love him. There are few so vile, but will love those that love them, be they never so mean. No doubt it is the death of our heavenly life, to have hard and doubtful thoughts of God; to conceive of him as a hater of the creature (except only of obstinate rebels), and as one that had rather damn us, than save us, and that is glad of an opportunity to do us a mischief, or at least hath no great good-will to us: this is to put the blessed God into the similitude of Satan. And who, then, can set his heart and love upon him? When in our vile unbelief and ignorance we have drawn the most ugly picture of God in our imaginations, then we complain that we cannot love him, and delight in him. This is the case of many thousand Christians. Alas! that we should thus belie and blaspheme God, and blast our own joys, and depress our spirits! Love is the very essence of God. The Scripture tells us, that "God is love;" it telleth us, that fury dwelleth not in him; that he delighteth not in the death of him that dieth, but rather that he repent and live. (1 John iv. 16; Isa. xxvii. 4; Ezek. xviii. 32, and xxxiii. 11.) Much more, that he testifieth his love to his chosen; and his full resolution, effectually to save them. Oh, if we could always think of God but as we do of a friend! As of one that doth unfeignedly love us, even more than we do ourselves; whose very heart is set upon us to do us good, and hath therefore provided us an everlasting dwelling with himself; it would not then be so hard to have our

[m] All our love is moved from some good which we apprehend in the party loved; when the ground and motive of our love faileth, the affection must needs cease.—*Bishop Hall's Select Thoughts*, sect. lv. p. 158. God hath put that pity into a righteous man, as to be merciful to his very beast, and love his enemy; and yet people look on God as more cruel to those that are willing to obey him. Even Pythagoras could not find in his heart to kill and feed on the flesh of the creatures; and yet men think the God of love delights in the damnation of those that would fain be such as he would have them be. Semiferi nos homines, quinimo feri, quos infœlix necessitas et malus usus edocuit cibos ex his carpere; miseratione interdum commovemur illorum, arguimus nos ipsos; penitusque revisa atque inspecta damnamus, quod humanitatis jure deposito naturalis initii consortia reperimus. Deos aliquis credit pios, beneficos, mites, cæde pecorum delectari? &c. Quanto minus damnatione hominum?—*Arnobius adver. Gent.* lib. vii. p. 242. It seems Arnobius was of Pythagoras's mind, against killing the creatures to eat. And Minut. Fœlix saith, that then Christians ate no blood, p. 390.

heart still with him! Where we love most heartily, we shall think most sweetly, and most freely; and nothing will quicken our love more than the belief of his love to us. Get therefore a truer conceit of the loving nature of God, and lay up all the experiences and discoveries of his love to thee; and then see if it will not further thy heavenly-mindedness. I fear, most Christians think higher of the love of a hearty friend, than of the love of God: and then what wonder if they love their friends better than God, and trust them more confidently than God, and had rather live with them than with God, when they take them for better and trustier friends than God, and of more merciful and compassionate nature!

Sect. X. 9. Another thing I would advise you to, is this:[n] Be a careful observer of the drawings of the Spirit, and fearful of quenching its motions, of resisting its workings; if ever thy soul get above the earth, and get acquainted with this living in heaven, the Spirit of God must be to thee as the chariot to Elijah; yea, the very living principle by which thou must move and ascend. O, then, grieve not thy guide, quench not thy life, (Eph. iv. 30; 1 Thess. v. 19,) knock not off thy chariot-wheels! If thou do, no wonder if thy soul be at a loss, and all stand still, or fall to the earth. You little think how much the life of all your graces, and the happiness of your souls doth depend upon your ready and cordial obedience to the Spirit. When the Spirit urgeth thee to secret prayer, and thou refusest obedience; when he forbids thee thy known transgressions, and yet thou wilt go on; when he telleth thee which is the way, and which not, and thou wilt not regard; no wonder if heaven and thy soul be strange. If thou wilt not follow the Spirit while it would draw thee to Christ,[o] and to thy duty; how should it lead thee to heaven, and bring thy heart into the presence of God? O, what supernatural help, what bold access shall that soul find in its approaches to the Almighty, that is accustomed to a constant obeying of the Spirit! And how

[n] Hear a heathen:—Prope est à te Deus, tecum est, intus est. Ita dico; intra nos Spiritus sedet, malorum bonorumque vestrorum observator; et custos hic prout à nobis tractatus est, ita nos ipse tractat. Bonus vir sine Deo nemo est. An potest aliquis supra fortunam nisi ab illo adjutus exsurgere?—*Seneca*, epist. 41.

[o] I speak not of any drawing of the Spirit above, or contrary to the Word, but its enforcing the precepts and prohibitions of the Word upon our hearts. And that not persuading the will, I think, immediately by himself, but exciting, and so using our reason and conscience as the instruments to persuade the will, and affect the heart.

backward, how dull, and strange, and ashamed will he be to these addresses, who hath long used to break away from the Spirit that would have guided him! Even as stiff and unfit will they be for this spiritual motion, as a dead man to a natural. I beseech thee, christian reader, learn well this lesson, and try this course; let not the motions of thy body only, but also the very thoughts of thy heart, be at the Spirit's beck. Dost thou not feel sometimes a strong impulsion to retire from the world, and draw near to God? O do not thou disobey, but take the offer, and hoist up sail while thou mayest have this blessed gale. When the wind blows strongest, thou goest fastest, either backward or forward. The more of this Spirit we resist, the deeper will it wound; and the more we obey, the speedier is our pace; as he goes heaviest that hath the wind in his face, and he easiest that hath it in his back.

10. Lastly, I advise as a further help to this heavenly work, that thou neglect not the due care for the health of thy body, and for the maintaining a vigorous cheerfulness in thy spirits; nor yet over-pamper and please thy flesh: learn how to carry thyself with prudence to thy body. It is a useful servant if thou give it its due, and but its due: it is a most devouring tyrant, if thou give it the mastery, or suffer it to have what it unreasonably desireth. And it is as a blunted knife, as a horse that is lame, as thy ox that is famished, if thou injuriously deny it what is necessary to its support. When we consider how frequently men offend on both extremes, and how few use their bodies aright, we cannot wonder if they be much hindered in their heavenly conversing. Most men are very slaves to their sensitive appetite, and can scarce deny any thing to the flesh, which they can give it on easier rates, without much shame, or loss, or grief. The flesh thus used is as unfit to serve you as a wild colt to ride on. When such men should converse in heaven, the flesh will carry them out to an ale-house, or to their sports, to their profits, or credit, or vain company; to wanton practices, or sights, or speeches, or thoughts: it will thrust a whore, or a pair of cards, or a good bargain into their minds, instead of God. Look to this specially, you that are young, and heathful, and lusty: as you love your souls, remember that in Rom. xiii. 14, which converted Austin, Make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil its desires; and that in Rom. viii. 4—8, 12—14. Some few others do much hinder their heavenly joy, by over-rigorous denying the body its necessaries, and so making it un-

able to serve them. But the most, by surfeiting and excess, do overthrow and disable it.[p] You love to have your knife keen, and every instrument you use in order: when your horse goes lustily, how cheerfully do you travel! As much need hath the soul of a sound and cheerful body. If they who abuse their bodies, and neglect their health,[q] did wrong the flesh only, the matter were small, but they wrong the soul also: as he that spoils the house, doth wrong the inhabitant. When the body is sick, and the spirits do languish, how heavily move we in these meditations and joys! Yet where God denieth this mercy, we may the better bear it, because he oft occasioneth our benefit by the denial.

CHAP. VI.

Containing the Description of the great Duty of Heavenly Contemplation.

SECT. I. Though I hope what is already spoken be not unuseful, and that it will not by the reader be cast aside; yet I must tell you, that the main thing intended is yet behind, and that which I aimed at when I set upon this work. I have observed the maxim, that my principal end be last in execution, though it was first in my intention. All that I have said is but for the preparation to this: the doctrinal part is but to instruct you for this; the rest of the uses are but introductions to this: the motives I have laid down, are but to make you willing for this: the hinderances mentioned were but so many blocks in the

[p] It is ill with men when they cram into their bellies as if they were laying provision in a garner, rather than eating for digestion: and when they are so curious, and must have their devouring appetite so pleased, that the cook is got in more esteem than the husbandman; this is called λαιμαργία, a madness in the throat.—*Clemens Alexandr. Pædagog.* lib. ii. cap. 1. Humanus animus quando corporibus nulla familiaritate conjungitur, nihilque extrinsecus habet concupiscentiæ carnalis admixtum, sed totus secum, ut ab initio conditus, et in se habitat, tunc sensibilia et mortalia cuncta transcendens in auras veræ libertatis evadit, et verbum intuens, in eo etiam ipsum patrem videt.—*Athanas. cont. Gentil.* lib. i.

[q] Those who are prone to excess in daintiness of diet, they nourish their own diseases, and are led by the great glutton the devil, whom I will not fear to call the belly-devil; which indeed is the worst and most pernicious of all devils. And it is better to be happy than to have a devil dwelling in you.—*Clemens Alexandr. Pædagog.* lib. ii. cap. 11.

way to this: the general helps which I last delivered, are but the necessary attendants of this; so that, reader, if thou neglect this that follows, thou dost frustrate the main end of my design, and makest me lose (as to thee) the chief of my labour. I once more entreat thee, therefore, as thou art a man that maketh conscience of a revealed duty, and that darest not wilfully resist the Spirit, as thou valuest the high delights of a saint, and the soul-ravishing exercise of heavenly contemplation, as all my former moving considerations seem reasonable to thee, and as thou art faithful to the peace and prosperity of thine own soul, that thou diligently study these directions following, and that thou speedily and faithfully put them into practice: practice is the end of all sound doctrine, and all right faith doth end in duty. I pray thee, therefore, resolve before thou readest any further, and promise here, as before the Lord, that if the following advice be wholesome to thy soul, thou wilt conscionably follow it, and seriously set thyself to the work; and that no laziness of spirit shall take thee off, nor the lesser business interrupt thy course, but that thou wilt approve thyself a doer of this word, and not an idle hearer only. Is this thy promise; and wilt thou stand to it? Resolve, man; and then I shall be encouraged to give thee my advice: if I spread not before thee a delicious feast, if I set thee not upon as gainful a trade, and put not into thy hand as delightful an employment as ever thou dealtest with in all thy life, then cast it away, and tell me I have deceived thee; only try it thoroughly, and then judge: I say again, if in the faithful following of this prescribed course, thou dost not find an increase of all thy graces, and dost not grow beyond the stature of common Christians, and art not made more serviceable in thy place, and more precious in the eyes of all that are discerning; if thy soul enjoy not more fellowship with God, and thy life be not fuller of pleasure and solace, and thou have not comfort readier by thee at a dying hour, and when thou hast greatest need;[r] then throw these directions back in my face, and exclaim against me as a deceiver for ever: except God should leave thee uncomfortable for a little season, for the more glorious manifestation of his attributes, and thy integrity, and single thee out as he did Job, for an example and mirror of constancy and patience, which would be but a preparative for thy fuller comfort.

[r] Tamen hæc via et scientia non discitur ex libris, sed desursum est: et cui vult participat eam Pater luminum; his quidem clarius, his verò obscurius.—*Gerson, in Alphabet. Divini Amoris*, part. 3. cap. 14.

Certainly, God will not forsake this his own ordinance thus conscionably performed, but will be found of those that thus diligently seek him. God hath, as it were, appointed to meet thee in this way, do not thou fail to give him the meeting, and thou shalt find by experience that he will not fail.

The duty which I press upon thee so earnestly, I shall now describe and open to thee; for I suppose, by this time, thou art ready to inquire, 'What is this so highly extolled work?' Why, it is the set and solemn acting of all the powers of the soul upon this most perfect object, rest, by meditation.

Sect. II. I will a little more fully explain the meaning of this description, that so the duty may lie plain before thee. 1. The general title that I give this duty is meditation; not as it is precisely distinguished from thought, consideration, and contemplation; but as it is taken in the larger and usual sense for thinking on things spiritual, and so comprehending consideration and contemplation.

That meditation is a duty of God's ordaining, not only in his written law, but also in nature itself, I never met with a man that would deny; but that it is a duty constantly and conscionably practised even by the godly, so far as my acquaintance extends, I must, with sorrow, deny it. It is in word confessed to be a duty by all, but by the constant neglect denied by most; and, I know not by what fatal customary security it comes to pass that men that are very tender-conscienced towards most other duties, yet do as easily overslip this, as if they knew it not to be a duty at all. They that are presently troubled in mind, if they omit but a sermon, a fast, a prayer in public or private, yet were never troubled that they have omitted meditation, perhaps all their lifetime to this very day; though it be that duty by which all other duties are improved, and by which the soul digesteth truths, and draweth forth their strength for its nourishment and refreshing. Certainly, I think that a man is but half an hour in chewing and taking into his stomach that meat which he must have seven or eight hours at least to digest; so a man may take into his understanding and memory more truth in one hour than he is able well to digest in many. A man may eat too much, but he cannot digest too well. Therefore, God commanded Joshua, that the book of the law depart not out of his mouth, but that he meditate therein day and night; that he may observe to do according to that which is written therein. (Josh. i. 8.) As digestion is the turning of the raw food into

chyle and blood, and spirits and flesh, so meditation rightly managed, turneth the truths received and remembered, into warm affection, raised resolution, and holy and upright conversation. Therefore, what good those men are like to get by sermons or providences, who are unacquainted with, and unaccustomed to, this work of meditation, you may easily judge. And why so much preaching is lost among us, and professors can run from sermon to sermon, and are never weary of hearing or reading, and yet have such languishing, starved souls, I know no truer or greater cause than their ignorance and unconscionable neglect of meditation. If a man have the lientery, that his meat passes from him as he took it in; or, if he vomits it up as fast as he eats it, what strength, and vigour of body, and senses, is this man like to have? Indeed, he may well eat more than a sounder man, and the small abode that it makes in the stomach, may refresh it at the present, and help to draw out a lingering, languishing, uncomfortable, unprofitable life; and so do our hearers that have this disease; perhaps they hear more than otherwise they needed, and the clear discovery and lively delivery of the truth of God, may warm and refresh them a little, while they are hearing, and perhaps an hour or two after; and, it may be, linger out their grace in a languishing, uncomfortable, unprofitable life; but if they did hear one hour, and meditate seven; if they did as constantly digest their sermons as they hear them, and not take in one sermon before the former is well concocted, they would find another kind of benefit by sermons, than the ordinary sort of the forwardest Christians do. I know many carnal persons do make this an argument against frequent preaching and hearing, who do it merely from a loathing of the Word, and know far less how to meditate than they know how understandingly to hear; only they pretend meditation against often hearing, because, that being a duty of the mind, you cannot so easily discern their omission of it. These are sick of the anorexia and apepsia; they have neither appetite nor digestion. The other of the boulimia; they have appetite, but no digestion.

Sect. III. But because meditation is a general word, and it is not all meditation that I here intend, I shall therefore lay thee down the difference whereby this meditation that I am urging thee to, is distinguished from all other kinds; and the difference is taken from the act, and from the object of it.

1. From the act, which I call the set and solemn acting of all the powers of the soul.

1. I call it the acting of them; for it is action that we are directing you in now, and not relations or dispositions; yet these also are necessarily presupposed. It must be a soul that is qualified for the work by the supernatural renewing grace of the Spirit, which must be able to perform this heavenly exercise.[a] It is the work of the living, and not of the dead; it is a work of all other most spiritual and sublime, and therefore not to be well performed by a heart that is merely carnal and terrene. Also, they must necessarily have some relation to heaven before they can familiarly there converse. I suppose them to be the sons of God, when I persuade them to love him; and to be of the family of God, yea, the spouse of his Son, when I persuade them to press into his presence, and to dwell with him. I suppose them to be such as have title to rest, when I persuade them to rejoice in the meditations of rest. These, therefore, being all presupposed, are not the duties here intended and required, but it is the bringing of their sanctified dispositions into act, and the delightful reviewing of their high relations. Habits and powers are but to enable us to action. To say, I am able to do this, or I am disposed to it, doth neither please God, nor advantage ourselves, except withal we really do it. God doth not regenerate thy soul that it may be able to know him, and not know him; or that it may be able to believe, and yet not believe; or that it may be able to love him, and yet not to love him; but he therefore makes thee able to know, to believe and love, that thou mayest indeed both know, believe, and love him. What good doth that power which is not reduced into act? Therefore, I am not now exhorting thee to be an able Christian, but to be an active Christian, according to the degree of that ability which thou hast. As thy store of money, or food, or raiment, which thou lettest lie by thee, and never usest, doth thee no good but please thy fancy, or raise thee to an esteem in the eyes of others, so all thy gifts, and powers, and habits, which lie still in thy soul, and are never acted, do profit or comfort thee little or nothing, but in satisfying thy fancy, and raising thee to the repute of an able man, so far as they are discernible to the standers-by.

Sect. IV. 2. I call this mediation, "the acting of the powers of the soul," meaning the soul as rational, to difference it from the cogitations of the soul as sensitive: the sensitive soul hath a kind

[a] God will have us to be saved by ourselves, viz., under God. This, therefore, is the nature of the soul, to be impelled, or driven on, and incited by itself.—*Clemens Alexandr. Stromat.* lib. vi.

of meditation by the common sense, the fantasy and estimation.[t] The fleshly man mindeth the things of the flesh. (Rom. viii.) If it were the work of the ear, or the eye, or the tongue, or the hands, which I am setting you on, I doubt not but you would more readily take it up; but it is the work of the soul, for bodily exercise doth here profit but little. The soul hath its labour and its ease; its business and its idleness; its intention and remission, as well as the body; and diligent students are usually as sensible of the labour and weariness of their spirits and brain, as they are of that of the members of the body. This action of the soul is it I persuade thee to.

Sect. V. 3. I call it the acting of "all" the powers of the soul, to difference it from the common meditation of students, which is usually the mere employment of the brain. It is not a bare thinking that I mean, nor the mere use of invention or memory, but a business of a higher and more excellent nature. When truth is apprehended only as truth, this is but an unsavoury and loose apprehension; but when it is apprehended as good, as well as true, this is a fast and delightful apprehension. As a man is not so prone to live according to the truth he knows, except it do deeply affect him, so neither doth his soul enjoy its sweetness, except speculation do pass to affection. The understanding is not the whole soul, and therefore cannot do the whole work. As God hath made several parts in man to perform their several offices for his nourishing and life, so hath he ordained the faculties of the soul to perform their several offices for his spiritual life: the stomach must chylify, and prepare for the liver; the liver and spleen must sanguify, and prepare for the heart and brain; and these must beget the vital and animal spirits, &c.; so the understanding must take in truths, and prepare them for the will, and it must receive them, and commend them to the affections. The best digestion is in the bottom of the stomach; the affections are, as it were, the bottom of the soul; and therefore the best digestion is there. While truth is but a speculation swimming in the brain, the soul hath not half received it, nor taken fast hold of it; Christ and heaven have various excellences, and therefore God hath formed the soul with a power of apprehending divers ways, that so we might be capable of enjoying those divers ex-

[t] Vita est vis per quam aliquid in seipso ex seipso agere potest; plurimum vero ipsum actum quo aliquid vivit, declarat.—*Mat. Martinius Cathol. Fid.* lib. iii. p. 721

cellences in Christ. Even as the creatures having their several uses, God hath given us several senses, that so we might enjoy the delights of them all. What the better had we been for the pleasant, odoriferous flowers and perfumes, if we had not possessed the sense of smelling; or what good would language or music have done us, if God had not given us the sense of hearing? or what delight should we have found in meats, or drinks, or sweetest things, if we had been deprived of the sense of tasting? So also, what good could all the glory of heaven have done us; or what pleasure should we have had, even in the goodness and perfection of God himself, if we had been without the affections of love and joy, whereby we are capable of being delighted in that goodness? And what benefit of strength or sweetness canst thou possibly receive by thy meditations on eternity, while thou dost not exercise those affections which are the senses of the soul, by which it must receive this sweetness and strength?

This is it that hath deceived Christians in this business; they have thought that meditation is nothing but the bare thinking on truths, and the rolling of them in the understanding and memory; when every schoolboy can do this, or persons that hate the things which they think on.

Therefore this is the great task in hand, and this is the work that I would set thee on: to get these truths from thy head to thy heart, and that all the sermons which thou hast heard of heaven, and all the notions that thou hast conceived of this rest, may be turned into the blood and spirits of affection, and thou mayest feel them revive thee, and warm thee at the heart, and mayest so think of heaven as heaven should be thought on.

There are two accesses of contemplation, said Bernard, one in intellection, the other in affection; one in light, the other in heat; one in acquisition, the other in devotion.[u] If thou shouldst study of nothing but heaven while thou livest, and shouldst have thy thoughts at command, to turn them hither on every occasion, and yet shouldst proceed no further than this; this were not the meditation that I intend, nor would it much advantage or better thy soul; as it is thy whole soul that must possess God hereafter, so must the whole, in a lower manner, possess him here. I have shown you in the beginning of this treatise, how the soul must enjoy the Lord in glory; to

[u] Contemplationis accessus duo sunt, unus in intellectu, alter in affectu; unus in lumine, alter in fervore; unus in acquisitione, alter in devotione.—*Bernard. in Cant.* ser. 46.

wit, by knowing, by loving, and joying in him. Why, the very same way must thou begin in thy enjoyment here.

So much as thy understanding and affections are sincerely acted upon by God, so much dost thou enjoy him: and this is the happy work of this meditation. So that you see here is somewhat more to be done than barely to remember and think of heaven. As running, ringing, and moving, and such-like labours, do not only stir a hand or foot, but do strain and exercise the whole body, so doth meditation the whole soul.

As the affections of sinners are set on the world, and turned to idols, and fallen from God, as well as the understanding, so must the affections of men be reduced to God, and taken up with him, as well as the understanding; and as the whole was filled with sin before, so the whole must be filled with God now. As St. Paul saith of knowledge, and gifts, and faith to remove mountains, that if thou have all these without love, "thou art but as sounding brass, or as a tinkling cymbal;" (1 Cor. xiii. 1, 2;) so I may say of the exercise of these, If in this work of meditation thou do exercise knowledge, and gifts, and faith of miracles, and not exercise love and joy, thou dost nothing; thou playest the child, and not the man; the sinner's part, and not the saint's. For so will sinners do also. If thy meditation tends to fill thy note-book with notions, and good sayings, concerning God, and not thy heart with longings after him, and delight in him, for aught I know thy book is as much a Christian as thou. Mark but David's description of the blessed man: "His delight is in the law[x] of the Lord, and therein doth he meditate day and night." (Psal. i. 3.)

Sect. VI. 4. I call this meditation "set and solemn," to difference it from that which is occasional and cursory. As there is prayer which is solemn, when we set ourselves wholly to the duty, and prayer which is sudden and short, commonly called ejaculations, when a man, in the midst of other business, doth send up some brief request to God; so also there is meditation solemn, when we apply ourselves only to that work; and there is meditation which is short and cursory, when in the midst of our business we have some good thoughts of God in our minds; and as solemn prayer is either first set, when a Christian, observing it as a standing duty, doth resolvedly practise it in a constant course; or, secondly, occasionally, when some unusual occasion doth put us upon it at a season extra-

[x] Heb. doctrine.

ordinary; so also meditation admits of the like distinction. Now, though I would persuade you to that meditation which is mixed with your common labours in your callings, and to that which special occasions do direct you to, yet these are not the main things which I here intend; but that you would make it a constant, standing duty, as you do by hearing, and praying, and reading the Scripture; and that you would solemnly set yourselves about it, and make it for that time your whole work, and intermix other matters no more with it than you would do with prayer or other duties. Thus you see, as it is differenced by its act, what kind of meditation it is that we speak of; viz., it is the set and solemn acting of all the powers of the soul.

Sect. VII. The second part of the difference is drawn from its object, which is "rest," or the most blessed state of man in his everlasting enjoyment of God in heaven. Meditation hath a large field to walk in; and hath as many objects to work upon, as there are matters, and lines, and words in the Scripture, as there are known creatures in the whole creation, and as there are particular discernible passages of Providence in the government of the persons and actions through the world; but the meditation that I now direct you in, is only of the end of all these, and of these as they refer to that end. It is not a walk from mountains to valleys, from sea to land, from kingdom to kingdom, from planet to planet; but it is a walk from mountains and valleys to the holy mount Zion; from sea and land to the land of the living; from the kingdoms of this world to the kingdom of saints; from earth to heaven; from time to eternity. It is a walking upon sun, and moon, and stars; it is a walking in the garden and paradise of God. It may seem far off; but spirits are quick, whether in the body or out of the body; their motion is swift; they are not so heavy or dull as these earthly lumps, nor so slow of motion as these clods of flesh. I would not have you cast off your other meditations, but, surely, as heaven hath the pre-eminence in perfection, so should it have the pre-eminence also in our meditations. That which will make us most happy when we possess it, will make us most joyful when we meditate upon it, especially when that meditation is a degree of possession, if it be such affecting meditation as I here describe.

You need not here be troubled with the fears of the world, lest studying so much on these high matters should craze your brains, and make you mad, unless you would go mad with delight and joy, and that of the purest and most solid kind. If I set you

to meditate as much on sin and wrath, and to study nothing but judgment and damnation, then you might justly fear such an issue. But it is heaven, and not hell, that I would persuade you to walk in. It is joy, and not sorrow, that I persuade you to exercise. I would urge you to look upon no deformed object, but only upon the ravishing glory of saints, and the unspeakable excellences of the God of glory, and the beams that stream from the face of his Son. Are these such sadding and madding thoughts? Will it distract a man to think of his only happiness? Will it distract the miserable to think of mercy, or the captive or prisoner to see deliverance, or the poor to think of riches and honour approaching? Neither do I persuade your thoughts to matters of great difficulty, or to study thorny and knotty controversies of heaven, or to search out things beyond your reach. If you should thus set your wit and invention upon the tenters, you might be quickly distracted or distempered indeed. But it is your affections more than your wits and inventions, which must be used in this heavenly employment we speak of. They are truths which are commonly known and professed, that your souls must draw forth and feed upon. The resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting, are articles of your creed, and not nicer controversies. Methinks it should be liker to make a man mad, to think of living in a world of woe, to think of abiding in poverty and sickness, among the rage of wicked men, than to think of living with Christ in bliss. Methinks, if we be not mad already, it should sooner distract us, to hear the tempests and roaring waves, to see the billows, and rocks, and sands, and gulfs, than to think of arriving safe at rest. But wisdom is justified of all her children. (Matt. xi. 19; Luke vii. 35.) Knowledge hath no enemy but the ignorant. This heavenly course was never spoke against by any, but those that never either knew it, or used it. I more fear the neglect of men that do approve it, than the opposition or arguments of any against it. Truth loseth more by loose friends than by sharpest enemies.

CHAP. VII.

Containing the fittest Time and Place for this Contemplation, and the Preparation of the Heart unto it.

Sect. I. Thus I have opened to you the nature of this duty, and by this time I suppose you partly apprehend what it is that

I so press upon you; which, when it is opened more particularly, you will more fully discern. I now proceed to direct you in the work: where I shall first show you how you must set upon it; and, Secondly, How you must behave yourself in it; and, Thirdly, How you shall shut it up. And here I suppose thee to be a man that dost conscionably avoid the forementioned hinderances, and conscionably use the forementioned helps, or else it is in vain to set thee a higher lesson, till thou hast first learned that; which, if thou have done, I then further advise thee: First, Somewhat concerning the time and season; Secondly, Somewhat concerning the place; and, Thirdly, Somewhat concerning the frame of thy spirit.

And, First, For the time, I advise thee that, as much as may be, it may be set and constant. Proportion out such a part of thy time to the work.

Stick not at their scruple, who question the stating of times as superstitious. If thou suit out thy time to the advantage of the work, and place no more religion in the time itself, thou needest not to fear lest this be superstition. As a workman in his shop will have a set place for every one of his tools and wares, or else when he should use it, it may be to seek; so a Christian should have a set time for every ordinary duty, or else when he should practise it, it is ten to one but he will be put by it. Stated time is a hedge to duty, and defends it against many temptations to omission. God hath stated none but the Lord's-day himself, but he hath left it to be stated and determined by ourselves, according to every man's condition and occasions, lest otherwise his law should have been a burden or a snare. Yet hath he left us general rules, which, by the use of reason and christian prudence, may help us to determine of the fittest times. It is as ridiculous a question of them that ask us where Scripture commands to pray so oft, or at such hours, privately, or in families; as if they asked where the Scripture commands that the church-house, or temple, stand in such a place, or the pulpit in such a place, or my seat in such a place; or where it commands a man to read the Scriptures with a pair of spectacles, &c. Most that I have known to break the bond of duty, and to argue against a stated time, have at last grown careless of the duty itself, and showed more dislike against the work than the time. If God give me so much money or wealth, and tell me not in Scripture how much such a poor man must have, nor how much my family, nor how much in clothes, and how much in expenses; is

it not lawful, yea, and necessary, that I make the division myself, and allow to each the due proportion? So, if God bestow on me a day or week of time, and give me such and such work to do in this time, and tell me not how much I shall allot to each work, certainly I must make the division myself, and cut my coat according to my cloth, and proportion it wisely and carefully too, or else I am like to leave something undone. Though God hath not told you at what hour you shall rise in the morning, or at what hours you shall eat and drink, yet your own reason and experience will tell you that, ordinarily, you should observe a stated time. Neither let the fear of customariness and formality deter you from this. That argument hath brought the Lord's-supper from once a week to once a quarter, or once a year; and it hath brought family duties, with too many of late, from twice a day to once a week, or once a month; and if it were not that man, being proud, is naturally of a teaching humour, and addicted to works of popularity and ostentation, I believe it would diminish preaching as much: and will it deal any better with secret duties, especially this of holy meditation? I advise thee, therefore, if thou well mayest, to allow this duty a stated time, and be as constant in it as in hearing and praying. Yet be cautious in understanding this. I know this will not prove every man's duty. Some have not themselves and their time at command, and therefore cannot set their hours. Such are most servants, and many children of poor and carnal parents; and many are so poor that the necessity of their families will deny them this freedom. I do not think it the duty of such to leave their labours for this work just at certain set times; no, nor for prayer, or other necessary worship. No such duty is at all times a duty. Affirmatives, especially positive, bind not *semper et ad semper*. When two duties come together, and cannot both be performed, it were then a sin to perform the lesser. Of two duties we must choose the greater, though of two sins we must choose neither. I think such persons were best to be watchful, to redeem time as much as they can, and take their vacant opportunities as they fall, and especially to join meditation and prayer, as much as they can, with the very labours of their callings. There is no such enmity between labouring and meditating, or praying in the spirit, but that both may conveniently be done together. Yet, I say, (as Paul, in another case,) if thou canst be free, use it rather. Those that have more spare time from worldly necessaries, and are masters to dispose of themselves and their time,

I still advise that they keep this duty to a stated time: and, indeed, it were no ill husbandry, nor point of folly, if we did so by all other duties. If we considered of the ordinary works of the day, and suited out a fit season and proportion of time to every work, and fixed this in our memory and resolution, or wrote it in a table, and kept it in our closets, and never break it but upon unexpected or extraordinary cause. If every work of the day had thus its appointed time, we should be better skilled, both in redeeming time and performing duty.

Sect. II. 2. I advise thee also, concerning thy time for this duty, that as it be stated, so it be frequent: just how oft it should be, I cannot determine, because men's several conditions may vary it; but in general, that it be frequent, the Scripture requireth, when it mentioneth meditating continually, and day and night. (Psal. i. 2; cxix. 48, 97, 99.) Circumstances of our condition, may much vary the circumstances of our duties. It may be one man's duty to hear or pray oftener than another, and so it may be in this of meditation. But for those that can conveniently omit other business, I advise, that it be once a day at least. Though Scripture tells us not how oft in a day we should eat or drink, yet prudence and experience will direct us twice or thrice a day, according to the temper and necessities of our bodies. Those that think they should not tie themselves to order or number of duties, but should then only meditate or pray, when they find the Spirit provoking them to it, do go upon uncertain and unchristian grounds. I am sure, the Scripture provokes us to frequency, and our necessity secondeth the voice of Scripture; and if through my own neglect, or resistance of the Spirit, I do not find it so to excite and quicken me, I dare not therefore disobey the Scripture, nor neglect the necessities of my own soul.[y] I should suspect that spirit which would turn my soul from constancy in duty:[y] if the Spirit in Scripture bid me meditate or pray, I dare not forbear it, because I find not the Spirit within me to second the command: if I find not incitation to duty before, yet I may find assistance while I wait in performance. I am afraid of laying my corruptions upon the Spirit, or blaming the want of the Spirit's assistance, when I should blame the backwardness of my

[y] In the same sense as Justin Martyr said, he would not believe Christ himself, if he had preached any other God, besides him who is the Creator of all; so may I say, I would not believe the spirit that should take me off my duty and obedience to God. Vid. Nicephor. Eccles. Histor. lib. iv. cap. 6.

own heart; nor dare I make one corruption a plea for another; nor urge the inward rebellion of my nature, as a reason for the outward disobedience of my life: and for the healing of my nature's backwardness, I more expect that the Spirit of Christ should do it in a way of duty, (which I still find to be his ordinary season of working,) than in a way of disobedience, and neglect of duty. Men that fall on duty, according to the frame of their spirits only, are like our ignorant vulgar, (or if you will, like the swine,) who think their appetite should be the only rule of their eating; when a wise man judgeth both of quantity and quality, by reason and experience; lest when his appetite is depraved, he should either surfeit or famish. Our appetite is no sure rule for our times of duty; but the word of God in general, and our spiritual reason, experience, necessity, and convenience in particular, may truly direct us.

Three reasons especially should persuade thee to frequency in this meditation on heaven.

1. Because seldom conversing with him will breed a strangeness betwixt thy soul and God: frequent society breeds familiarity, and familiarity increaseth love and delight, and maketh us bold and confident in our addresses. This is the main end of this duty; that thou mayest have acquaintance and fellowship with God therein; therefore, if thou come but seldom to it, thou wilt keep thyself a stranger still, and so miss of the end of the work. Oh! when a man feels his need of God, and must seek his help in a time of necessity, when nothing else can do him any good, you would little think what an encouragement it is, to go to a God that we know, and are acquainted with. Oh! saith the heavenly Christian, I know both whither I go, and to whom, I have gone this way many a time before now; it is the same God that I daily conversed with; it is the same way that was my daily walk; God knows me well enough, and I have some knowledge of him. On the other side, what a horror and discouragement to the soul will it be, when it is forced to fly God in straits: to think, Alas! I know not whither to go; I never went the way before; I have no acquaintance at the court of heaven; my soul knows not that God that I must speak to; and I fear he will not know my soul! But especially when we come to die, and must immediately appear before this God, and expect to enter into his eternal rest, then the difference will plainly appear; then what a joy will it be to think, I am going to the place that I daily conversed in; to the place

from whence I tasted so frequent delights; to that God whom I have met in my meditation so oft! My heart hath been at heaven before now, and tasted the sweetness that hath oft revived it; and (as Jonathan by his honey) if my eyes were so enlightened, and my mind refreshed, when I tasted but a little of that sweetness, what will it be when I shall feed on it freely? (1 Sam. xiv. 29.) On the other side, what a terror must it be to think, I must die, and go I know not whither; from a place where I am acquainted, to a place where I have no familiarity or knowledge; O sirs! it is an inexpressible horror to a dying man, to have strange thoughts of God and heaven; I am persuaded there is no cause so common, that makes death even to godly men unwelcome and uncomfortable. Therefore, I persuade thee to frequency in this duty, that seldomness breed not estrangedness from God.

2. And besides that, seldomness will make thee unskilful in the work, and strange to the duty, as well as to God. How unhandsomely and clumsily do men set their hands to a work that they are seldom employed in! Whereas frequency will habituate thy heart to the work, and thou wilt better know the way which thou daily walkest, yea, and it will be more easy and delightful also: the hill which made thee pant and blow at the first going up, thou mayest run up easily when thou art once accustomed to it. The heart, which of itself is naturally backward, will contract a greater unwillingness through disuse; and as an untamed colt not used to the hand, it will hardly come to hand, when thou shouldst use it.

3. And lastly, Thou wilt lose that heat and life by long intermissions, which with much ado thou didst obtain in duty. If thou eat but a meal in two or three days, thou wilt lose thy strength as fast as thou gettest it; if in holy meditation thou get near to Christ, and warm thy heart with the fire of love, if thou then turn away and come but seldom, thou wilt soon return to thy former coldness. If thou walk or labour till thou hast got thee heat, and then sit idle all day after, wilt thou not surely lose thy heat again? Especially, it being so spiritual a work, and so against the bent of nature, we shall be still inclining to our natural temper.

If water that is heated be long from the fire, it will return to its coldness, because that is its natural temper. I advise thee, therefore, that thou be as oft as may be in this soul-raising duty, lest when thou hast long rowed hard against the stream, or tide,

and wind, the boat should go farther down by thy intermission, than it was got up by all thy labour: and lest, when thou hast been long rolling thy stony heart towards the top of the hill, it should go faster down when thou dost slack thy diligence. It is true, the intermixed use of other duties may do much to the keeping thy heart above, especially secret prayer; but meditation is the life of most other duties; and the view of heaven is the life of meditation.

Sect. III. 3. Concerning the time of this duty, I advise thee that thou choose the most seasonable time.[s] All things are beautiful and excellent in their season. Unseasonableness may lose thee the fruit of thy labour; it may raise up disturbances and difficulties in the work; yea, it may turn a duty to sin: when the seasonableness of a duty doth make it easy, doth remove impediments, doth embolden us to the undertaking, and doth ripen its fruit.

The seasons of this duty are either, First, Extraordinary; or, Secondly, Ordinary.

1. The ordinary season for your daily performance cannot be particularly determined by man: otherwise God would have determined it in his word. But men's conditions of employment, and freedom, and bodily temper, are so various, that the same may be a seasonable hour to one, which may be unseasonable to another. If thou be a servant, or a hard labourer, that thou hast not thyself, nor thy time at command, thou must take that season which thy business will best afford thee. Either as thou sittest in the shop at work, or as thou travellest on the way, or as thou liest waking in the night. Every man best knows his own time, even when he hath the least to hinder him of his business in the world. But for those whose necessities tie them not so close, but that they may well lay aside their earthly affairs, and choose what time of the day they will, my advice to such is, that they carefully observe the temper of their body and mind, and mark when they find their spirits most active and fit for contemplation, and pitch upon that as the stated time. Some men are freest for duties when they are fasting, and some are unfittest of all. Some are fit for duties of humiliation at one season, and for duties of exultation at another. Every man is the meetest judge for himself. Only give me leave to tender you my observation, which time I have always found

[s] De tempore precandi vide quæ scripsit Cypri. de Oratione Dominica, sect. 25—27. pag. (Edit. Pamel. c. Goulart.) 316.

fittest for myself; and that is, the evening; from sun-setting to twilight; and sometimes in the night, when it is warm and clear. Whether it be any thing from the temperature of my body, I know not; but I conjecture that the same time would be seasonable to most tempers, for several natural reasons, which I will not now stand to mention. Neither would I have mentioned my own experience in this, but that I was encouraged hereunto by finding it suit with the experience of a better and a wiser man than myself, and that is Isaac: for it is said in Gen. xxiv. 63, that he went to meditate in a field at the eventide. And his experience I dare more boldly recommend unto you than my own; and as I remember, Dr. Hall, in his excellent treatise of meditation, gives you the like account of his own experience.

Sect. IV. 2. The Lord's-day is a time exceeding seasonable for this exercise. When should we more seasonably contemplate on rest, than on that day of rest which doth typify it to us? Neither do I think that typifying use is ceased, because the antitype is not fully yet to come; however, it being a day appropriated to worship and spiritual duties, methinks we should never exclude this duty which is so eminently spiritual. I think, verily, this is the chiefest work of a christian sabbath, and most agreeable to the intent of its positive institution. What fitter time to converse with our Lord than on that day which he hath appropriated to such employment, and therefore called it the Lord's-day? What fitter day to ascend to heaven than that on which our Lord did arise from earth, and fully triumph over death and hell, and take possession of heaven for us? The fittest temper for a true believer is to be in the Spirit on the Lord's-day: this was St. John's temper on that day; (Rev. i. 13;) and what can bring us to this ravishment in the Spirit but the spiritual beholding of our ravishing glory? Surely, though an outward ordinance may delight the ear, or tickle the fancy, yet it is the view of God that must ravish the soul. There is a great deal of difference betwixt the receiving of the word with joy, (Matt. xiii. 20,) and being in the Spirit on the Lord's-day. (Rev. i. 10.)

Two sorts of Christians I would entreat to take notice of this especially.

1. Those that spend the Lord's-day only in public worship, either through the neglect of this spiritual duty of meditation, or else by their over-much exercise of the public, allowing no time

to private duty. Though there be few that offend in this last kind, yet some there are, and a hurtful mistake to the soul it is. They will grow but in gifts, and common accomplishments, if they exercise but their gifts in outward performances.

2. Those that have time on the Lord's-day for idleness and vain discourse, and find the day longer than they know how well to spend, were these but acquainted with this duty of contemplation, they would need no other recreation or pastime; they would think the longest day short enough, and be sorry that the night hath shortened their pleasure.

Whether this day be of positive divine institution, and so to us Christians of necessary observation, is out of my way to handle here.[a] I refer those that doubt to what is in print on that subject, especially Master George Abbot against Broad; and, above all, Master Cawdry, and Master Palmer, their 'Sabbatum Redivivum.' It is an encouragement to the doubtful, to find the generality of its rational opposers, to acknowledge the usefulness, yea, the necessity, of a stated day, and the fitness of this above all other days. I would I could persuade those that are convinced of its morality, to spend a greater part of it in this true spirituality. But we do in this as in most things else, think it enough that we believe our duty, as we do the articles of our faith, and let who will put it in practice: we will dispute for duty, and let others perform it. As I have known some drunkards upon the ale-bench will plead for godly men, while themselves are ungodly; so do too many for the observation of the Lord's-day, who themselves are unacquainted with this spiritual part of its observation. Christians, let heaven have some share in your sabbaths, where you must shortly keep your everlasting

[a] I confess it a very great confirmation to me, that the Lord's-day was of divine separation, to find it so exceeding clear and certain that the church hath still observed it ever since the apostles' days; not that I take my faith from antiquity. But this, as to the case of fact, is a clear proof that the apostles used it, and so a fuller exposition of Scripture concerning its institution. Ignatius frequently presseth it. Or if any doubt of his writings, yet Justin Martyr is a witness beyond exception, who, in the end of his second Apology, tells us, that the Christians still met on that day, and shows how they spent it in reading, exhortation, prayer, sacrament, &c. See also Tertul. Apologet. cap. 16; et Lib. de Idololatria, cap. xiv. p. (edit. Pamel.) 173. n. 109; et Lib. de Coron. Milit. p. 206. n. 38, et 208. n. 129; et Cyprian. Epist. 59. ad Fidem; Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib. iv. cap. 17, et lib. iii. cap. 27; et August. Epist. 119. ad Januar. et Clement. Constitut. Apostol. lib. ii. cap. 63; Basil. de Spir. Sanct. cap. 27; Cyril. in Joan. lib. xii. cap. 58; Ambros. Serm. 62; Hieron. in Vit. Paul; Idem Epist. ad Eustach. Concil. Constantinop. can. 8; Chrysost. Serm. 5. de Resurrect.; August. Epist. 87. ad Basil.

sabbath. As you go from stair to stair, till you come to the top, so use your sabbaths as steps to glory, till you have passed them all, and are there arrived. Especially you that are poor men, and servants, that cannot take time in the week as you desire, see that you well improve this day. Now your labour lies not so much upon you; now you are unyoked from your common business, be sure, as your bodies rest from their labours, that your spirit seek after rest with God. I admonish all those that are possessed of the censorious devil, that if they see a poor Christian walking privately in the fields on the Lord's-day, they would not pharisaically conclude him a sabbath-breaker, till they know more. It may be he takes it as the opportunest place to withdraw himself from the world to God. Thou seest where his body walks, but thou seest not where he is walking in spirit. Hannah was censured for a woman drunk, till Eli heard her speak for herself; and when he knew the truth, he was ashamed of his censure. The silent, spiritual worshipper is most liable to their censure, because he gives not the world an account of his worship.

Thus I have directed thee to the fittest season for the ordinary performance of this heavenly work.

Sect. V. 2. For the extraordinary performance, these following are seasonable times. 1. When God doth extraordinarily revive and enable thy spirit. When God hath enkindled thy spirit with fire from above, it is that it may mount aloft more freely.[b] It is a choice part of a Christian's skill, to observe the temper of his own spirit, and to observe the gales of grace, and how the Spirit of Christ doth move upon his. Without Christ we can do nothing; (John xv. 5;) therefore, let us be doing when he is doing: and be sure not to be out of the way, nor asleep, when he comes. The sails of the windmill stir not without the wind; therefore, they must set them a-going when the wind blows. Be sure that thou watch this wind and tide, if thou wouldst have a speedy voyage to heaven. A little labour will set thy heart a-going at such a time as this, when another time thou mayest study and take pains to little purpose. Most Christians do sometime find a more than ordinary reviving and activeness of spirit: take this as sent from heaven to raise thee thither: and when the Spirit is lifting thy heart from the earth, be sure thou

[b] As Gerson, in the forecited place, saith, This art or way of meditation is not learned chiefly out of books; but the Spirit of God bestoweth it as he pleaseth, on some more plentifully, and on some more sparingly.

then lift at it thyself. As when the angel came to Peter in his prison and irons, and smote him on the side, and raised him up, saying, "Arise up quickly, gird thyself, bind on thy sandals, and cast thy garments about thee, and follow me;" and Peter arose and followed till he was delivered; (Acts xii. 7, 8, &c.) so when the Spirit finds thy heart in prison and irons, and smites it, and bids thee "Arise quickly, and follow me," be sure thou then arise and follow, and thou shalt find thy chains fall off, and all doors will open, and thou wilt be at heaven before thou art aware.

Sect. VI. 2. When thou art cast into perplexing troubles of mind, through sufferings, or fear, or care, or temptations, then is it seasonable to address thyself to this duty. When should we take our cordials but in our times of fainting? When is it more seasonable to walk to heaven, than when we know not in what corner on earth to live with comfort; or when should our thoughts converse above, but when they have nothing but grief to converse with below? Where should Noah's dove be, but in the ark, when the waters do cover the earth, and she cannot find rest for the sole of her foot? (Gen. viii. 8, 9.) What should we think on but our Father's house, when we want even the husks of the world to feed on? Surely, God sends thee thy afflictions to this very purpose. Happy, thou poor man, if thou make this use of thy poverty; and thou that art sick, if thou so improve thy sickness. It is seasonable to go to the promised land, when our burdens and tasks are increased in Egypt, and when we endure the dolours of a grievous wilderness. Believe it, reader, if thou knewest but what a cordial in thy griefs and cares the serious views of glory are, thou wouldst less fear these harmless troubles, and more use that preserving, reviving remedy. I would not have thee, as mountebanks, take poison first, and then their antidote, to show its power; so to create thy affliction to try this remedy: but if God reach thee forth the bitterest cup, drop in but a little of the taste of heaven, and I warrant thee it will sufficiently sweeten it to thy spirit. If the case thou art in seem never so dangerous, take but a little of this antidote of rest, and never fear the pain or danger. I will give thee, to confirm this, but the example of David and the opinion of Paul, and desire thee thoroughly to consider of both. "In the multitude of my thoughts within me," saith David, "thy comforts delight my soul." (Psalm xcliv. 19.) As if he should say, "I have multitudes of sadding thoughts which crowd upon me;

thoughts of my sins, and thoughts of my foes; thoughts of my dangers, and thoughts of my pains; yet, in the midst of all this crowd, one serious thought of the comforts of thy love, and especially of the comfortable life in glory, doth so dispel the throng, and scatter my cares, and disperse the clouds which my troubles had raised, that they do even revive and delight my soul.' And Paul, when he had cast up his full accounts, gives thee the sum in Rom. viii. 18: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." Study these words well, for every one of them is full of life. If these true sayings of God were truly and deeply fixed in thy heart, and if thou couldst, in thy sober meditation, but draw out the comfort of this one scripture, I dare affirm it would sweeten the bitterest cross, and in a sort make thee forget thy trouble, as Christ saith, "A woman forgets her travel, for joy that a man is born into the world." (John xvi. 21.) Yea, and make thee rejoice in thy tribulation. I will add but one text more: "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward is renewed day by day. For our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." (2 Cor. iv. 16, 17.)

Sect. VII. 4. Another fit season for this heavenly duty is, when the messengers of God do summon us to die; when either our gray hairs, or our languishing bodies, or some such-like forerunners of death, do tell us that our change cannot be far off; when should we more frequently sweeten our souls with the believing thoughts of another life, than when we find that this is almost ended, and when flesh is raising fears and terrors? Surely, no men have greater need of supporting joys than dying men; and those joys must be fetched from our eternal joy. Men that have earthly pleasures in their hands, may think they are well, though they taste no more; but when a man is dying, and parting with all other pleasures, he must then fetch his pleasure from heaven, or have none: when health is gone, and friends lie weeping by our beds; when houses, and lands, and goods, and wealth, cannot afford us the least relief, but we are taking our leave of earth for ever, except a hole for our bodies to rot in; when we are daily expecting our final day, it is now time to look to heaven, and to fetch in comfort and support from

thence; and as heavenly delights are sweetest when they are unmixed and pure and have no earthly delights conjoined with them, so therefore the delights of dying Christians are ofttimes the sweetest that ever they had. Therefore have the saints been generally observed to be then most heavenly when they were nearest dying. What a prophetical blessing hath Jacob for his sons when he lay a-dying; and so Isaac! What a heavenly song, what a divine benediction doth Moses conclude his life withal! (Deut. xxxij. xxxiii.) Nay, as our Saviour increased in wisdom and knowledge, so did he also in their blessed expressions, and still the last the sweetest. What a heavenly prayer, what a heavenly advice doth he leave his disciples, when he is about to leave them! When he saw he must leave the world and go to the Father, how doth he wean them from worldly expectations! How doth he mind them of the mansions in his Father's house; and remember them of his coming again to fetch them thither; and open the union they shall have with him, and with each other; and promise them to be with him to behold his glory! There is more worth in those four chapters, John xiv.—xvii., than in all the books in the world beside. When blessed Paul was ready to be offered up, what heavenly exhortation doth he give the Philippians; what advice to Timothy; what counsel to the elders of the Ephesian church! (Acts xx.) How near was St. John to heaven in his banishment in Patmos, a little before his translation to heaven! What heavenly discourse had Luther in his last sickness! How close was Calvin to his divine studies in his very sickness, that when they would have dissuaded him from it, he answers, "Vultisne me otiosum a Domino apprehendi!" What! would you have God find me idle? I have not lived idly, and shall I die idly? The like may be said of our famous Reignolds. When excellent Bucholcer was near his end, he wrote his book 'De Consolatione Decumbentium.' Then it was that Tossanus wrote his 'Vade mecum.' Then Doctor Preston was upon the 'Attributes of God.' And then Mr. Bolton was on the 'Joys of Heaven.' It were endless to enumerate the eminent examples of this kind. It is the general temper of the spirits of the saints, to be then most heavenly when they are nearest to heaven. As we used to say of the old and the weak, 'that they have one foot in the grave already;' so we may say of the godly, when they are near their rest, 'they have one foot, as it were, in heaven already.' When should a traveller look homewards with joy, but when he is come

within the sight of his home? It is true, the pains of our bodies and the fainting of our spirits, may somewhat abate the liveliness of our joy; but the measure we have will be the more pure and spiritual, by how much the less it is kindled from the flesh. Oh, that we, who are daily languishing, could learn this daily heavenly conversing, and could say as the apostles in the forecited place: (2 Cor. iv. 16—18:) Oh, that every gripe that our bodies feel, might make us more sensible of future ease; and that every weary day and hour might make us long for our eternal rest! That as the pulling down of one end of the balance is the lifting up of the other, so the pulling down of our bodies might be the lifting up of our souls; that as our souls were usually at the worst when our bodies were at the best, so now they might be at the best when our bodies are at the worst. Why should we not think thus with ourselves? why, every one of these gripes that I feel, are but the cutting of the stiches for the ripping off mine old attire, that God may clothe me with the glory of his saints. Had I rather live in these rotten rags, than be at the trouble and pains to shift me? Should the infant desire to stay in the womb, because of the straitness and pains of the passage; or because he knows not the world that he is to come into; nor is acquainted with the fashions and inhabitants thereof? Am not I nearer to my desired rest than ever I was? If the remembrance of these griefs will increase my joy, when I shall look back upon them from above, why then should not the remembrance of that joy abate my griefs when I look upwards to it from below? And why should the present feeling of these dolours so much diminish the foretastes of glory, when the remembrance of them will then increase it? All these gripes and woes that I feel, are but the farewell of sin and sorrows. As nature useth to struggle hard a little before death, and as the devil cast the man to the ground and tore him, when he was going out of him; (Mark ix. 26;) so this tearing and troubling which I now feel, is but at the departure of sin and misery: for as the effects of grace are sweetest at last, so the effects of sin are bitterest at the last, and this is the last that ever I shall taste of it; when once the whirlwind and earthquake is past, the still voice will next succeed, and God only will be in the voice, though sin also was in the earthquake and whirlwind.

Thus, Christian, as every pang of sickness should mind the wicked of their eternal pangs, and make them look into the bottom of hell, so should all thy woe and weakness mind thee

of thy near approaching joy, and make thee look as high as heaven. And, as a ball, the harder thou art smitten down to earth, the higher shouldst thou rebound up to heaven. If this be thy case, who readest these lines, (and if it be not now, it will be shortly,) if thou lie in consuming, painful sickness, if thou perceive the dying time draw on, O where should thy heart be now but with Christ? Methinks thou shouldst even behold him, as it were, standing by thee, and shouldst bespeak him as thy father, thy husband, thy physician, thy friend. Methinks thou shouldst even see, as it were, the angels about thee waiting to perform their last office to thy soul, as thy friends wait to perform theirs to thy body; those angels which disdained not to bring the soul of a scabbed beggar to heaven, will not think much to conduct thee thither. Oh, look upon thy sickness as Jacob did on Joseph's chariots, and let thy spirit revive within thee, and say, 'It is enough that Joseph, that Christ is yet alive; for because he lives, I shall live also.' (John xiv. 19.) As thou art sick, and needest the daintiest food, and choicest cordials, so here are choicer than the world affords. Here is the food of angels and glorified saints; here are all the joys that heaven doth yield, even the vision of God, the sight of Christ, and whatsoever the blessed there possess: this table is spread for thee to feed on in thy sickness; these dainties are offered thee by the hand of Christ: he hath written thee the receipt in the promises of the Gospel; he hath prepared thee all the ingredients in heaven; only put forth the hand of faith, and feed upon them, and rejoice and live. The Lord saith to thee, as he did to Elias, "Arise and eat, because the journey is too great for thee." (1 Kings xix. 7.) Though it be not long, yet the way is foul: I counsel thee, therefore, that thou obey his voice, and arise and eat, and in the strength of that meat thou mayest walk till thou come to the mount of God. Die not in the ditch of horror or stupidity; but, as the Lord said to Moses, "Go up into the mount, and see the land that the Lord hath promised, and die in the mount." (Deut. xxxii. 49, 50.) And as old Simeon, when he saw Christ in his infancy in the temple, so do thou behold him in the temple of the New Jerusalem as in his glory, and take him in the arms of thy faith, and say, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eye (of faith) hath seen thy salvation." As thou wast never so near to heaven as now, so let thy spirit be nearer it now than ever.

So you have seen which is the fittest season for this duty:[c] I should here advise thee also of some times unseasonable, but I shall only add this one caution, The unseasonable urging of the most spiritual duty, is more from the tempter than from the Spirit of God! When Satan sees a Christian in a condition wherein he is unable and unfit for a duty, or wherein he may have more advantage against us by our performance of it than by our omitting it, he will then drive on as earnestly to duty, as if it were the very Spirit of holiness: that so upon our omitting, or ill performance, he may have somewhat to cast in our teeth, and to trouble us with. And this is one of his ways of deceiving, when he transforms himself into an angel of light. It may be, when thou art on thy knees in prayer, thou shalt have many good thoughts will come into thy mind; or when thou art hearing the word, or at such unseasonable times. Resist these good thoughts as coming from the devil, for they are formally evil, though they are materially good; even good thoughts in themselves may be sinful to thee. It may be, when thou shouldst be diligent in thy necessary labours, thou shalt be moved to cast aside all, that thou mayest go to meditation or to prayer: these motions are usually from the spirit of delusion: the Spirit of Christ doth nothing unseasonably: God is not the God of confusion, but of order.

Sect. VIII. Thus much I thought necessary to advise thee concerning the time of this duty. It now follows that I speak a word of the fittest place.[d] Though God is everywhere to be found by a faithful soul; yet some places are more convenient for a duty than others.

1. As this is a private and spiritual duty, so it is most convenient that thou retire to some private place: our spirits had need of every help, and to be freed from every hinderance in

[c] Read Master Symonds's 'Deserted Soul,' p. 225—227.

[d] Every place is truly holy where we receive the knowledge and cogitations of God.—*Clem. Alex. Stromat.* lib. vii. Vide Gerson, ubi infra, cap. 24. Dominos docet nos, ut opera sua imitemur, et sicut ipse fecit ita et nos faciamus: ecce oraturus erat, et ascendit in montem; oportet etiam nos à negotiis otiosos orare, et non in medio multorum; sed pernoctantes ne statim ut cœperimus cessemus.—*Theophylact. in Luke*, cap. 6. Yet the principal secrecy and silence must be in the soul within, rather than without; that is, that the soul shut out of itself all human, worldly cares, all vain and hurtful thoughts, and whatsoever may hinder it from reaching to the end which it doth intend. For it often falls out that a man is alone, separated from the company of men, and yet by fantasies, thoughts, and melancholies, doth suf-

the work: and the quality of these circumstances, though to some they may seem small things, doth much conduce to our hinderance or our help. Christ himself thought it not vain to direct in this circumstance of private duty. (Matt. vi. 4, 6, 18.) If in private prayer we must shut our door upon us, that our Father may hear us in secret, so it is also requisite in this meditation. How oft doth Christ himself depart to some mountain, or wilderness, or other solitary place! For occasional meditation I give thee not this advice, but for this daily set and solemn duty I advise that thou withdraw thyself from all society, yea, though it were the society of godly men, that thou mayest awhile enjoy the society of Christ: if a student cannot study in a crowd, who exercises only his invention and memory, much less when thou must exercise all the powers of thy soul, and that upon an object so far above nature: when thy eyes are filled with the persons and actions of men, and thine ears with their discourse, it is hard then to have thy thoughts and affections free for this duty. Though I would not persuade thee to Pythagoras's cave, nor to the hermit's wilderness, nor to the monk's cell; yet I would advise thee to frequent solitariness, that thou mayest sometimes confer with Christ, and with thyself, as well as with others. We are fled so far from the solitude of superstition, that we have cast off the solitude of contemplative devotion. Friends use to converse most familiarly in private, and to open their secrets, and let out their affections most freely. Public converse is but common converse. Use, therefore, as Christ himself did, (Mark i. 35,) to depart sometimes into a solitary place, that thou mayest be wholly vacant for this great employment. (See Matt. xiv. 23;

fer the most grievous and burdensome company in himself; which fantasies do beget in him various tumults, and conferences, and prattlings; bringing before the eyes of his understanding, sometime one thing, sometime another: leading him sometime into the kitchen, sometime into the market; bringing thence to him the unclean delights of the flesh: showing him dances, and beauties, and songs, and such kind of vanities drawing to sin: as St. Jerome humbly confesseth of himself, that when he was in the wilderness, without any company save wild beasts and scorpions, yet he was oft, in his thoughts, in dances, and in the company of the ladies at Rome. So these fantasies will make the soul, even when it is alone, to be angry, and quarrel with some one that is absent, as if he were present; to be counting money; it will pass over the seas; it will fly abroad the land; sometime it will be in high dignities; and so of innumerable fancies the like. Such a soul is not secret, nor alone: nor is a devout soul in contemplation alone; for it is never less alone. It is in the best company, even with God and saints by holy desires and cogitations.—*Gerson*, part iii. fol. 382. *De Monte Contemplationis*, cap. 23.

Mark vi. 47; Luke ix. 18, 36; John vi. 15, 16.) We seldom read of God's appearing, by himself, or his angels, to any of his prophets or saints in a throng, but frequently when they were alone.*

And as I advise thee to a place of retiredness, so also that thou observe more particularly, what place and posture best agreeth with thy spirit: whether within doors, or without; whether sitting still, or walking. I believe Isaac's example in this also, will direct us to the place and posture which will best suit with most, as it doth with me, viz., his walking forth to meditate in the field at the eventide. And Christ's own example in the places forecited give us the like direction. Christ was so used to a solitary garden, that even Judas, when he came to betray him, knew where to find him. (John xviii. 1, 2.) And though he took his disciples thither with him, yet did he separate himself from them for more secret devotions. (Luke xxii. 41.) And though his meditation be not directly named, but only his praying, yet it is very clearly implied. (Matt. xxvi. 38, 39.) His soul is first made sorrowful with the bitter meditations on his death and sufferings, and then he poureth it out in prayer. (Mark xiv. 34.) So that Christ had his accustomed place, and consequently accustomed duty, and so must we. Christ hath a place that is solitary, whither he retireth himself even from his own disciples, and so must we: Christ's meditations do go further than his thoughts; they affect and pierce his heart and soul, and so must ours. Only there is a wide difference in the object: Christ meditates on the suffering that our sins had deserved, that the wrath of his Father even passed through his thoughts upon all his soul: but the meditation that we speak of, is on the glory he hath purchased; that the love of the Father, and the joy of the Spirit, might enter at our thoughts, and revive our affections, and overflow our souls. So that, as Christ's meditation was the sluice or floodgate, to let in hell to overflow his affections, so our meditation should be the sluice to let in heaven into our affections.

Sect. IX. So much concerning the time and place of this duty. I am next to advise thee somewhat concerning the pre-

* Chrysostomus ait: Solitudo est locus idoneus ad philosophiam; referente Jac. Grynæo. Magisterio suo Dominus secreto orare nos præcepit; in abditis est emotis locis, in cubiculis ipsis, quod magis convenit fidei. Ut sciamus, Deum ubique esse præsentem, audire omnes et videre, et majestatis suæ plenitudine in abdita quæque et occulta penetrare.—*Cyprian. de Oratione Domine*, sect. ii. p. (mihi) 309.

parations of thy heart. The success of the work doth much depend on the frame of thy heart. When man's heart had nothing in it that might grieve the Spirit, then was it the delightful habitation of his Maker. God did not quit his residence there, till man did repel him by unworthy provocations. There grew no strangeness, till the heart grew sinful, and too loathsome a dungeon for God to delight in. And were this soul reduced to its former innocency, God would quickly return to his former habitation: yea, so far as it is renewed and repaired by the Spirit, and purged of its lusts, and beautified with his image, the Lord will yet acknowledge it his own, and Christ will manifest himself unto it, and the Spirit will take it for his temple and residence. So far as the soul is qualified for conversing with God, so far it doth actually, for the most part, enjoy him. Therefore, with all diligence keep thy heart, for from thence are the issues of life. (Prov. iv. 23.)

More particularly, when thou settest on this duty; First, Get thy heart as clear from the world as thou canst; wholly lay by the thoughts of thy business, of thy troubles, of thy enjoyments, and of every thing that may take up any room in thy soul. Get thy soul as empty as possibly thou canst, and so it may be the more capable of being filled with God. It is a work, as I have said, that will require all the powers of thy soul, if they were a thousand times more capacious and active than they are, and therefore you have need to lay by all other thoughts and affections, while you are busied here. If thou couldst well perform some outward duty with a piece of thy heart, while the other is absent, yet this above all I am sure thou canst not. Surely, if thou once address thyself to the business indeed, thou wilt be as the covetous man at the heap of gold, that when he might take as much as he could carry away, lamented that he was able to bear no more. So when thou shalt get into the mount of contemplation, thou wilt find there as much of God and glory, as thy narrow heart is able to contain; and almost nothing to hinder thy full possession, but only the uncapableness of thy own spirit. O then (wilt thou think) that this understanding were larger, that I might conceive more! that these affections were wider to contain more! it is more my own unfitness than any thing else, which is the cause that even this place is not my heaven! God is in this place, and I know it not. This mount is full of the angels of God, but mine eyes are shut, and cannot see them. O the words of love that Christ

hath to speak! O the wonders of love that he hath to show! But, alas! I cannot bear them yet: heaven is here ready at hand for me, but my uncapable heart is unready for heaven! Thus wouldst thou lament, that the deadness of thy heart doth hinder thy joys; even as a sick man is sorry that he wants a stomach when he sees a feast before him.

Therefore, reader, seeing it is much in the capacity and frame of thy heart, how much thou shalt enjoy of God in this contemplation, be sure that all the room thou hast be empty; and, if ever, seek him here with all thy soul: thrust not Christ into the stable and the manger, as if thou hadst better guests for the chiefest rooms. Say to all thy worldly business and thoughts, as Christ to his disciples, "Sit you here, while I go and pray yonder." (Matt. xxvi. 36.) Or, as Abraham, when he went to sacrifice Isaac, left his servant and ass below the mount, saying, "Stay you here, and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you:" so say thou to all thy worldly thoughts, "Abide you below, while I go up to Christ, and then I will return to you again." Yea, as God did terrify the people with his threats of death, if any one should dare to come to the mount, when Moses was to receive the law from God; so do thou terrify thy own heart, and use violence against thy intruding thoughts, if they offer to accompany thee to the mount of contemplation. Even as the priests thrust Uzziah the king out of the temple, where he presumed to burn incense, when they saw the leprosy to arise upon him; so do thou thrust these thoughts from the temple of thy heart, which have the badge of God's prohibition upon them. As you will beat back your dogs, yea, and leave your servants behind you, when yourselves are admitted into the prince's presence, so also do by these. Yourselves may be welcome, but such followers may not.

Sect. X. 2. Be sure thou set upon this work with the greatest seriousness that possibly thou canst. Customariness here is a killing sin. There is no trifling in holy things: God will be sanctified of all that draw near him. These spiritual, excellent, soul-raising duties are the most dangerous, if we miscarry in them, of all. The more they advance the soul, being well used, the more they destroy it, being used unfaithfully: as the best meats corrupted, are the worst. To help thee therefore to be serious when thou settest on this work; First, Labour to have the deepest apprehensions of the presence of God, and the in-

comprehensible greatness of the majesty which thou approachest. If Rebecca veil her face at her approach to Isaac; if Esther must not draw near till the king hold forth the sceptre; if dust and worms'-meat must have such respect, think, then, with what reverence thou shouldst approach thy Maker; think thou art addressing thyself to Him that made the worlds with the word of his mouth; that upholds the earth as in the palm of his hand; that keeps the sun, and moon, and heaven, in their courses; that bounds the raging sea with the sands, (Jer. v. 22,) and saith, "Hitherto go, and no further:" thou art going about to converse with Him, before whom the earth will quake, and devils tremble; before whose bar thou must shortly stand, and all the world with thee, to receive their doom. O think, I shall then have lively apprehensions of his majesty; my drowsy spirits will then be awakened; and my stupid irreverence be laid aside: why should I not now be roused with a sense of his greatness, and the dread of his name possess my soul?

Secondly, Labour to apprehend the greatness of the work which thou attemptest, and to be deeply sensible both of its weight and height, of its concernment and excellency. If thou wert pleading for thy life at the bar of a judge, thou wouldst be serious; and yet that were but a trifle to this: if thou wert engaged in such a work as David was against Goliah, whereon the kingdom's deliverance did depend, in itself considered, it were nothing to this. Suppose thou wert going to such a wrestling as Jacob's; suppose thou wert going to see the sight which the three disciples saw in the mount; how seriously, how reverently wouldst thou both approach and behold! If the sun do suffer any notable eclipse, how seriously do all run out to see it! If some angel of heaven should but appoint to meet thee, at the same time and place of thy contemplations, how dreadfully, how apprehensively, wouldst thou go to meet him! Why, consider then with what a spirit thou shouldst meet the Lord, and with what seriousness and dread thou shouldst daily converse with him: when Manoah had seen but an angel, he cries out, "We shall surely die, because we have seen God." (Judg. xiii. 22.)

Consider also the blessed issue of the work; if it do succeed, it will be an admission of thee into the presence of God; a beginning of thy eternal glory on earth; a means to make thee live above the rate of other men, and admit thee into the next room to the angels themselves; a means to make thee

both live and die both joyfully and blessedly: so that the prize being so great, thy preparation should be answerable. There is none on earth that live such a life of joy and blessedness as those that are acquainted with this heavenly conversation. The joys of all other men are but like a child's play, a fool's laughter; as a dream of health to the sick, or as a fresh pasture to a hungry beast. It is he that trades at heaven that is the only gainer, and he that neglecteth it that is the only loser; and, therefore, how seriously should this work be done!

CHAP. VIII.

Of Consideration, the Instrument of this Work; and what Force it hath to move the Soul.

Sect. I. Having showed thee how thou must set upon this work, I come now to direct thee in the work itself, and to show thee the way which thou must take to perform it. All this has been but to set the instrument (thy heart) in tune, and now we are come to the music itself; all this hath been but to get thee an appetite; it follows now that thou approach unto the feast; that thou sit down and take what is offered, and delight thy soul as with marrow and fatness. Whoever you are that are children of the kingdom, I have this message to you from the Lord: "Behold, the dinner is prepared; the oxen and fatlings are killed: come, for all things are now ready." (Matt. xxii. 4; Luke xiv. 17.) Heaven is before you; Christ is before you; the exceeding, eternal weight of glory is before you: come, therefore, and feed upon it. Do not make light of this invitation, (Matt. xxii. 5,) nor put off your own mercies with excuses, (Luke xiv. 18,) whatever thou art, rich or poor, though in alms-houses or hospitals, though in highways or hedges, my commission is, if possible, to compel you to come in: "And blessed is he that eateth bread in the kingdom of God." (Luke xiv. 15.) The manna lieth about your tents; walk forth into the wilderness, gather it up, take it home, and feed upon it. So that the remaining work is only to direct you how to use your understandings for the warming of your affections, and to fire your hearts by the help of your heads; and herein it will be necessary that I observe this method: First, To show you what

nstrument it is that you must work by. Secondly, Why, and ow this way of working is like to succeed, and attain its end. hirdly, What powers of the soul should here be acted, and what re the particular affections to be excited, and what objective onsiderations are necessary thereto, and in what order you hould proceed. Fourthly, By what acts you must advance to the eight of the work. Fifthly, What advantages you must take, nd what helps you must use for the facilitating your success. ixthly, In what particulars you must look narrowly to your earts through the whole; and I will be the briefer in all, lest ou should lose my meaning in a crowd of words, or your houghts be carried from the work itself, by an over-long and edious explication of it.

Sect. II. 1. The great instrument that this work is done by, is ratiocination, reasoning the case with yourselves, discourse of mind, cogitation, or thinking; or, if you will, call it consideration. I here suppose you to know the things to be considered, and therefore shall wholly pass over that meditation of students which tends only to speculation, or knowing. They are known truths that I persuade you to consider, for the grossly ignorant that know not the doctrine of everlasting life, are for the present incapable of this duty.

Man's soul, as it receives and retains the ideas or shapes of things, so hath it a power to choose out any of these deposited ideas, and draw them forth, and act upon them again and again; even as a sheep can fetch up his meat for rumination; or otherwise nothing would affect us but while the sense is receiving it, and so we should be somewhat below the brutes. This is the power that here you must use: to this choice of ideas or subjects for your cogitations, there must necessarily concur the act of the will,[f] which indeed must go along in the whole work; for this must be a voluntary, not a forced cogitation: some men do consider whether they will or not, and are not able to turn away their own thoughts; so will God make the wicked consider of their sins, when he shall set them all in order before them. (Psal. l. 21, 22.) And so shall the damned consider of heaven, and of the excellency of Christ whom they once despised, and of the eternal joys which they have foolishly lost. But this forced consideration is not that I mean, but that which

[f] For (as Aquinas and others) the will is the beginner of our actions, *quoad exercitium actus*, though the understanding be the beginner, *quoad actus specificationem*. However that stand, yet they must concur here.

thou dost willingly and purposely choose; but though the will be here requisite, yet still consideration is the instrument of the work.

Sect. III. 2. Next, let us see what force consideration hath for the moving the affections, and for the powerful imprinting of things in the heart.

Why, First, Consideration doth, as it were, open the door between the head and the heart; the understanding having received truths, lays them up in the memory; now, consideration is the conveyer of them from thence to the affections: there are few men of so weak understanding or memory, but they know and can remember that which would strangely work upon them, and make great alterations in their spirits, if they were not locked up in their brain, and if they could but convey them down to their hearts: now, this is the great work of consideration. O what rare men would they be, who have strong heads, and much learning, and knowledge, if the obstructions between the head and the heart were but opened, and their affections did but correspond to their understanding! Why, if they would but bestow as much time and pains in studying the goodness and the evil of things, as they bestow in studying the truth and falsehood of enunciations, it were the readiest way to obtain this: he is usually the best scholar, who hath the most quick, clear, and tenacious apprehension. He is the best scholar who hath the readiest passage from the ear to the brain;[g] but he is the best Christian who hath the readiest passage from the brain to the heart; now, consideration is that on our parts that must open the passage, though the Spirit open as the principal cause: inconsiderate men are stupid and senseless.

Sect. IV. 2. Matters of great weight, which do nearly concern us, are aptest to work most effectually upon the heart; now, meditation draweth forth these working objects, and presents them to the affections in their worth and weight; the most delectable object doth not please him that sees it not; nor doth the joyfullest news affect him that never hears it: now, consideration presents before us those objects that were as absent, and brings them to the eye and the ear of the soul. Are not Christ, and glory, think you, affecting objects? Would not they

g Paucis opus est ad bonam mentem literis, sed nos ut cætera in supervacuum diffundimus, ita philosophiam ipsam; quem admodum omnium, sic literarum quoque intemperantia laboramus. Non vitæ sed scholæ discimus, inquit Seneca.

work wonders upon the soul, if they were but clearly discovered; and strangely transport us, if our apprehensions were any whit answerable to their worth? Why, by consideration it is that they are presented to us: this is the prospective glass of the Christian, by which he can see from earth to heaven.

Sect. V. 3. As consideration draweth forth the weightiest objects, so it presenteth them in the most affecting way, and presseth them home with enforcing arguments. Man is a rational creature, and apt to be moved in a reasoning way; especially when reasons are evident and strong: now, consideration is a reasoning the case with a man's own heart, and what a multitude of reasons, both clear and weighty; are always at hand for to work upon the heart! When a believer would reason his heart to this heavenly work, how many arguments do offer themselves! From God, from the Redeemer, from every one of the divine attributes, from our former estate, from our present estate, from promises, from seals, from earnest, from the evil we now suffer, from the good we partake of, from hell, from heaven: every thing doth offer itself to promote our joy. Now, meditation is the hand to draw forth all these; as when you are weighing a thing in the balance, you lay on a little more, and a little more, till it weigh down; so if your affections do hang in a dull indifferency, why, due meditation will add reason after reason, till the scales do turn; or, as when you are buying any thing of necessity for your use, you bid a little more, and a little more, till at last you come to the seller's price; so when meditation is persuading you to joy, it will first bring one reason, and then another, till it have silenced all your distrust and sorrows, and your cause to rejoice lies plain before you. If another man's reasons will work so powerfully with us, though we are uncertain whether his heart do concur with his speeches, and whether his intention be to inform us, or deceive us; how much more should our own reasons work with us, when we are acquainted with the right intentions of our own hearts! Nay, how much more rather should God's reasons work with us, which we are sure are neither fallacious in his intent, nor in themselves, seeing he did never yet deceive, nor was ever deceived! Why, now, meditation is but the reading over and repeating God's reasons to our hearts, and so disputing with ourselves in his arguments and terms. And is not this then likely to be a prevailing way? What reasons doth the prodigal plead with himself, why he should return to his Father's house! And as many and

strong have we to plead with our affections, to persuade them to our Father's everlasting habitations. And by consideration it is that they must all be set a-work.

Sect. VI. 4. Meditation puts reason in its authority and pre-eminence. It helpeth to deliver it from its captivity to the senses, and setteth it again upon the throne of the soul. When reason is silent, it is usually subject; for when it is asleep the senses domineer. Now, consideration awakeneth our reason from its sleep, till it rouse up itself, as Sampson, and break the bonds of sensuality wherewith it is fettered; and then, as a giant refreshed with wine, it bears down the delusions of the flesh before it. What strength can the lion put forth when he is asleep? What is the king more than another man, when he is once deposed from his throne and authority? When men have no better judge than the flesh, or when the joys of heaven go no further than their fantasies, no wonder if they work but as common things. Sweet things to the eye, and beautiful things to the ear, will work no more than bitter and deformed; every thing worketh in its own place, and every sense hath its proper object. Now, it is spiritual reason, excited by meditation, and not the fantasy or fleshly sense, which must savour and judge of these superior joys. Consideration exalteth the objects of faith, and disgraceth comparatively the objects of sense. The most inconsiderate men are the most sensual men. It is too easy and ordinary to sin against knowledge; but against sober, strong, continued consideration, men do more seldom offend.[h]

Sect. VII. 5. Meditation also putteth reason into his strength. Reason is at the strongest, when it is most in action. Now, meditation produceth reason into act. Before, it was a standing water, which can move nothing else when itself moveth not, but now it is as the speedy stream which violently bears down all before it. Before, it was as the still and silent air, but now it is as

[h] Voluntatis bifariam moveri et flecti potest: aut ab interno principio et agente, vel ab externo. Interius principium est tum naturalis inclinatio in suum objectum, tum Deus ipse talis naturalis inclinationis author. Idcirco nemo potest voluntatem ut interius agens movere nisi Deus, et ipse cujus est voluntas. Externum movens duplex, unum ipsum voluntatis objectum, bonum; viz. ab intellectu apprehensum, et voluntati efficaciter oblatum. Alterum sunt ipsæ passiones, concupiscentia, aliique affectus, qui in appetitu degunt sensitivo. Ab iis enim sæpe voluntas ad aliquid volendum seducitur atque efficitur. Nam efficiunt hæ passiones ut multa quæ mala sunt, videantur voluntati bona; ita ut ea in hæc inclinet. Ita dæmones possunt affectus turbare, commovere, afficere: et per hos voluntatem.—*Zanchius de Pot. Dem.* cap. 11. p. 169. Nothing more common than for a drunkard to take a forbid-

the powerful motion of the wind, and overthrows the opposition of the flesh and the devil. Before, it was as the stones which lie still in the brook; but now, when meditation doth set it to work, it is as the stone out of David's sling, which smites the Goliah of our unbelief in the forehead. As wicked men continue wicked, not because they have not reason in the principle, but because they bring it not into act and use; so godly men are uncomfortable and sad, not because they have no causes to rejoice, nor because they have not reason to discern those causes, but because they let their reason and faith lie asleep, and do not labour to set them a-going, nor stir them up to action by this work of meditation. You know that our very dreams will deeply affect. What fears, what sorrows, what joy, will they stir up! How much more, then, would serious meditation affect us!

Sect. VIII. 6. Meditation can discontinue this discursive employment. That may be accomplished by a weaker motion continued, which will not by a stronger at the first attempt. A plaster that is never so effectual to cure, must yet have time to do its work, and not be taken off as soon as it is on. Now, meditation doth hold the plaster to the sore: it holdeth reason and faith to their works, and bloweth the fire till it thoroughly burn. To run a few steps will not get a man heat, but walking an hour together may. So, though a sudden occasional thought of heaven will not raise our affections to any spiritual heat, yet meditation can continue our thoughts, and lengthen our walk till our hearts grow warm.

And thus you see what force meditation or consideration hath for the effecting of this great elevation of the soul, whereto I have told you it must be the instrument.

den cup, or a fornicator his whore, while his conscience tells him that it is a sin, and that *hic et nunc*, it is better to forbear; the good of honesty being to be preferred before the pleasure. For when sense is violent, it is not a bare knowing, or concluding against sin, that will restrain, except it be also strong, and serious, and constant, in acting of our judgment, as is sufficient to bear down the violence of passion. And this is the work of deep consideration. I conclude, therefore, that the saving or losing of men's souls lies most in the well or ill-managing of this work of consideration. This the great business that God calls men to for their salvation, and which he so blesseth, that I think we may say, that every well-considering man is a godly man, that useth it on true grounds, seriously and constantly; and every wicked man is an inconsiderate man.

CHAP. IX.

What Affections must be acted, and by what Considerations and Objects, and in what Order.

SECT. I. Thirdly, To draw the heart yet nearer to the work. The third thing to be discovered to you is, what powers of the soul must here be acted; what affections excited; what considerations of their objects are necessary thereto, and in what order we must proceed. I join all these together, because, though in themselves they are distinct things, yet, in the practice they all concur to the same action.

The matters of God which we have to think on, have their various qualifications, and are presented to the soul of man in divers relative and modal considerations. According to the several considerations of the objects, the soul itself is distinguished into its several faculties, powers, and capacities; that as God hath given man five senses to partake of the five distinct excellences of the objects of sense, so he hath diversified the soul of man, either into faculties, powers, or ways of acting, answerable to the various qualifications and considerations of himself and the inferior objects of this soul. And, as if there be more sensible excellences in the creatures, yet they are unknown to us who have but these five senses to discern them by; so whatever other excellences are in God and our happiness, more than these faculties or powers of the soul can apprehend, must needs remain wholly unknown to us, till our souls have senses, as it were, suitable to those objects, even as it is known to a tree or a stone, what sound, and light, and sweetness are, or that there are any such things in the world at all.

Now, these matters of God are primarily diversified to our consideration, under the distinction of true and good: accordingly, the primary distinction concerning the soul, is into the faculties of understanding and will: the former having truth for its object, and the latter goodness. This truth is sometimes known by evident demonstration, and so it is the object of that we call knowledge, which also admits of divers distinctions, according to several ways of demonstration, which I am loth here to puzzle you with. Sometimes it is received from the testimony of others, which receiving we call belief. When any thing else would obscure it, or stands up in

competition with it, then we weigh their several evidences, and accordingly discover and vindicate the truth; and this we call judgment. Sometime by the strength, the clearness, or the frequency of the understanding's apprehensions, this truth doth make a deeper impression, and so is longer retained: which impression and retention we call memory. And as truth is thus variously presented to the understanding, and received by it; so also is the goodness of the object variously represented to the will, which doth accordingly put forth its various acts. When it appeareth only as good in itself, and not good for us, or suitable, it is not the object of the will at all; but only this enunciation, "It is good," is passed upon it by the judgment, and withal it raiseth an admiration at its excellency. If it appear evil to us, then we nill it: but if it appear both good in itself, and to us, or suitable, then it provoketh the affection of love. If the good thus loved do appear as absent from us, then it exciteth the passion of desire. If the good so loved and desired do appear possible and feasible in the attaining, then it exciteth the passion of hope, which is a compound of desire and expectation: when we look upon it as requiring our endeavour to attain it, and as it is to be had in a prescribed way, then it provokes the passion of courage or boldness, and concludes in resolution. Lastly, If this good be apprehended as present, then it provoketh to delight or joy. If the thing itself be present, the joy is greatest. If but the idea of it, either through the remainder or memory of the good that is past, or through the fore-apprehension of that which we expect, yet even this also exciteth our joy. And this joy is the perfection of all the rest of the affections, when it is raised on the full fruition of the good itself.[1]

Sect. II. So that by this time, I suppose you see, both what are the objects that must move our affections, and what powers of the soul apprehend these objects. You see, also, I doubt not, what affections you must excite, and in what order it is to be

[1] Lege Gibieuf de Libertat. lib. ii. chap. 20. s. 7. p. 427. Ut perspicue solideque expediatur hæc quæstio, perinde nos philosophari debemus ac si intellectus et voluntas una eademque essent, aut etiam ab essentia minime distinguerentur, &c. Bonum et malum sive coram, arripit nos, sive absens, provocat aut revocat, aut vocat; sc. aut præsens, aut futurum, aut præteritum, aut possibile est. Ubique voluntas quietem quærens inquietat bonum. Undique illam malum inquietat. Isthinc distribuuntur affectus pro boni obtentione aut cautione. Amor recto et simplici obtutu in bonum ruit. Cum istud præsens videt, transformatur in lætitium: cum futurum putat, facessit in spem; cum præteritum, aut possibile est in desiderium distenditur.—*Eus. Noremburg. de Arte Voluntatis*, lib. iv. p. 265. Vide ultra.

done: yet, for your better assistance, I will more fully direct you in the several particulars.

1. Then you must, by cogitation, go to the memory, which is the magazine or treasure of the understanding; thence you must take forth those heavenly doctrines which you intend to make the subject of your meditation: for the present purpose, you may look over any promise of eternal life in the Gospel; any description of the glory of the saints, or the very articles of the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. Some one sentence concerning those eternal joys, may afford you matter for many years' meditation; yet it will be a point of wisdom here, to have always a stock of matter in our memory, that so when we should use it, we may bring forth out of our treasury things new and old. For a good man hath a good treasury in his heart, from whence he bringeth forth good things; (Luke vi. 45;) and out of this abundance of his heart he should speak to himself as well as to others. Yea, if we took things in order, and observed some method in respect of the matter, and did meditate, first on one truth concerning eternity, and then another, it would not be amiss. And if any should be barren of matter through weakness of memory, they may have notes or books of this subject for their furtherance.

Sect. III. 2. When you have fetched from your memory the matter of your meditation, your next work is to present it to your judgment. Open there the case as fully as thou canst, set forth the several ornaments of the crown, the several dignities belonging to the kingdom, as they are partly laid open in the beginning of this book. Let judgment deliberately view them over, and take as exact a survey as it can. Then put the question, and require a determination: Is there happiness in all this, or not? Is not here enough to make me blessed? Can he want any thing who fully possesseth God? Is there any thing higher for a creature to attain? Thus urge thy judgment to pass an upright sentence, and compel it to subscribe to the perfection of thy celestial happiness, and to leave this sentence as under its hand upon record. If thy senses should here begin to mutter, and to put in a word for fleshly pleasure or profits, let judgment hear what each can say. Weigh the arguments of the world and flesh in one end, and the arguments for the pre-eminence of glory in the other end, and judge impartially which should be preferred. Try whether there be any comparison to be made; which is more excellent, which is more manly, which

is more satisfactory, and which more pure, which freeth most from misery, and advanceth us highest. And which dost thou think is of longer continuance? Thus let deliberate judgment decide it, and let not flesh carry it by noise and by violence: and when the sentence is passed and recorded in thy heart, it will be ready at hand to be produced upon any occasion, and to silence the flesh in its next attempt, and to disgrace the world in its next competition.

Thus exercise thy judgment in the contemplation of thy rest; thus magnify and advance the Lord in thy heart, till a holy admiration hath possessed thy soul.

Sect. IV. 3. But the great work, which you may either premise, or subjoin to this as you please, is, to exercise thy belief of the truth of thy rest; and that, both in respect of the truth of the promise, and also the truth of thy own interest and title. As unbelief doth cause the languishing of all our graces, so faith would do much to revive and actuate them, if it were but revived and actuated itself, especially our belief of the verity of the Scripture, I conceive as needful to be exercised and confirmed, as almost any point of faith. But of this I have spoken in the second part of this book, whither I refer thee for some confirming arguments. Though few complain of their not believing Scripture, yet I conceive it to be the commonest part of unbelief, and the very root of bitterness, which spoileth our graces. Perhaps thou hast not a positive belief of the contrary, nor dost not flatly think that Scripture is not the word of God: that were to be a downright infidel indeed. And yet thou mayest have but little belief that Scripture is God's word, and that both in regard of the habit and the act. It is one thing not to believe Scripture to be true, and another thing positively to believe it to be false. Faith may be idle, and suspend its exercise towards the truth, though it do not yet act against the truth. It may stand still, when it goes not out of the way. It may be asleep, and do you but little service, though it do not directly fight against you. Besides, a great deal of unbelief may consist with a small degree of faith. If we did soundly believe that there is such a glory, that within a few days our eyes shall behold it;[k]

[k] Tu perire Deo credis, si quid oculis nostris hebetibus subtrahitur? Corpus omne sive arescit in pulverem, sive in humorem solvitur, vel in cinerem comprimitur, vel in nidorem, tenuatur, subducitur nobis. Sed Deo elementorum custodis reservatur. Nec ullum damnum sepulturæ timeas, &c. Vide quam in solatium nostri resurrectionem futuram omnis natura meditetur. Sol demergit et

Oh, what passions would it raise within us, were we thoroughly persuaded that every word in the Scripture concerning the inconceivable joys of the kingdom, and the inexpressible blessedness of the life to come, were the very word of the living God, and should certainly be performed to the smallest tittle! O, what astonishing apprehensions of that life would it breed! What amazing horror would seize upon our hearts, when we found ourselves strangers to the conditions of that life, and utterly ignorant of our portion therein! What love, what longings, would it raise within us! Oh, how it would actuate every affection! How would it transport us with joy upon the least assurance of our title! If I were as verily persuaded that I shall shortly see those great things of eternity promised in the word, as I am that this is a chair that I sit in, or that this is paper that I write on, would it not put another spirit within me? Would it not make me forget and despise the world, and even forget to sleep, or to eat, and say, as Christ, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." (John iv. 32.) O sirs! you little know what a thorough belief would work. Not that every one hath such affections who hath a true faith; but thus would the acting and improvement of our faith advance us.

Therefore let this be a chief part of thy business in meditation. Produce the strong arguments for the truth of Scripture; plead them against thy unbelieving nature; answer and silence all the cavils of infidelity; read over the promises; study all confirming providences; call forth thine own recorded experiences; remember the Scriptures already fulfilled both to the church and saints in former ages, and eminently to both in this present age, and those that have been fulfilled particularly to thee; get ready the clearest and most convincing arguments, and keep them by thee, and frequently thus use them. Think it not enough that thou wast once convinced, though thou hast now forgot the arguments that did it. No; nor that thou hast the arguments still in thy book, or in thy brain. This is not the acting of thy faith; but present them to thy understanding in thy frequent meditations, and urge them home till they force belief. Actual convincing, when it is clear and frequent, will work those deep impressions on the heart, which an old, neg-

nascitur, astra labuntur et redeunt; flores occidunt et revivistunt; post senium arbusta froudescunt; semina non nisi corrupta revirescunt. Ita corpus in seculo ut arbores in hyberno occultant virorum ariditate mentita. Quid festinas ut cruda adhuc hyeme reviviscat et redeat? Expectandum nobis etiam corporis ver est.—*Minut. Fœlix, Octav.* p. 396.

lected, forgotten conviction will not. Oh, if you would not think it enough that you have faith in the habit, and that you did once believe, but would be daily setting this first wheel a-going; surely, all the inferior wheels of the affections would more easily move. Never expect to have love and joy move when the foregoing grace of faith stands still.

And as you should thus act your assent to the promise, so also your acceptation, your adherence, your affiance, and your assurance. These are the four steps of application of the promise to ourselves. I have said somewhat among the helps to move you to get assurance, but that which I here aim at is, that you would daily exercise it. Set before your faith the freeness and the universality of the promise. Consider of God's offer, and urging it upon all; and that he hath excepted from the conditional covenant no man in the world: nor will exclude any from heaven who will accept of his offer. Study also the gracious disposition of Christ, and his readiness to entertain and welcome all that will come. Study all the evidences of his love, which appeared in his sufferings, in his preaching the Gospel, in his condescension to sinners, in his easy conditions, in his exceeding patience, and in his urgent invitations. Do not all these discover his readiness to save? Did he ever yet manifest himself unwilling? Remember also his faithfulness to perform his engagements. Study also the evidences of his love in thyself; look over the works of his grace in thy soul; if thou do not find the degree which thou desirest, yet deny not that degree which thou findest; look after the sincerity more than the quantity. Remember what discoveries of thy state thou hast made formerly in the work of self-examination; how oft God hath convinced thee of the sincerity of thy heart. Remember all the former testimonies of the Spirit, and all the sweet feelings of the favour of God, and all the prayers that he hath heard and granted, and all the rare preservations and deliverances, and all the progress of his Spirit in his workings on thy soul, and the disposals of providence, conducing to thy good; the vouchsafing of means, the directing thee to them; the directing of ministers to meet with thy state; the restraint of those sins that thy nature was most prone to. And though one of these considered alone, may be no sure evidence of his special love, which I expect thou shouldst try by more infallible signs, yet lay them all together, and then think with thyself whether all these do not testify the good-will of the Lord concerning thy

salvation, and may not well be pleaded against thine unbelief. And whether thou mayest not conclude with Sampson's mother, when her husband thought they should surely die, "If the Lord were pleased to kill us, he would not have received an offering at our hands; neither would he have showed us all these things, nor would, as at this time, have told us such things as these." (Judges xiii. 22, 23.)

Sect. V. 2. When thy meditation has thus proceeded about the truth of thy happiness, the next part of the work is to meditate of its goodness, that when the judgment hath determined, and faith hath apprehended, it may then pass on to raise the affections.

1. The first affection to be acted is love; the object of it, as I have told you, is goodness. Here, then, here, Christian, is the soul-reviving part of thy work: go to thy memory, thy judgment, and thy faith, and from them produce the excellences of thy rest; take out a copy of the record of the Spirit in Scripture, and another of the sentence registered in thy spirit, whereby the transcendent glory of the saints is declared; present these to thy affection of love; open to it the cabinet that contains the pearl; show it the promise, and that which it assureth. Thou needest not look on heaven through a multiplying glass; open but one casement, that love may look in; give it but a glimpse of the back parts of God, and thou wilt find thyself presently in another world; do but speak out, and love can hear; do but reveal these things, and love can see. It is the brutish love of the world that is blind; divine love is exceeding quicksighted. Let thy faith, as it were, take thy heart by the hand, and show it the sumptuous buildings of thy eternal habitation, and the glorious ornaments of thy Father's house; show it those mansions which Christ is preparing, and display before it the honours of the kingdom. Let faith lead thy heart into the presence of God, and draw as near as possibly thou canst, and say to it,[1] 'Behold the Ancient of days; the Lord

[1] He that doubteth whether the philosophers themselves did acknowledge these divine excellences, let him read Fernel. de Abditis Rerum Causis, c. 9. Plato in Epinom.: Deos asserit scire, videre, audireque omnia; nihil ipsos fugere, quod aut sensu aut mente percipi posset. Eos omnia posse quæcunque mortales immortalesve possunt. Bonos illos, immo optimos esse. Quicquid mortale est, quicquid vivit et spirat, quicquid usquam est, cœlum, terram, maria, ab iis omnia et facta esse et possideri. Et in Parmenide: Nullum nisi Deum supremam habere rerum scientiam, neque illarum cognitione privandum. Et in Epinomide: Ego assero, Deum causam omnium esse, nec aliter fieri posse. Lege etiam Aristotel. de Cœlo, lib. i. sum. nona.

Jehovah, whose name is, I AM. This is he who made the worlds with his word; this is the Cause of all causes, the Spring of action, the Fountain of life, the First Principle of the creature's motions, who upholds the earth, who ruleth the nations, who disposeth of events, and subdueth his foes; who governeth the depths of the great waters, and boundeth the rage of her swelling waves; who ruleth the winds, and moveth the orbs, and causeth the sun to run its race, and the several planets to know their courses. This is he that loved thee from everlasting, that formed thee in the womb, and gave thee this soul; who brought thee forth, and showed thee the light, and ranked thee with the chiefest of his earthly creatures; who endued thee with thy understanding, and beautified thee with his gifts; who maintaineth thee with life, and health, and comforts; who gave thee thy preferments, and dignified thee with thy honours, and differenced thee from the most miserable and vilest of men. Here, O here, is an object, now, worthy of thy love; here shouldst thou even put out thy soul in love; here thou mayest be sure thou canst not love too much. This is the Lord that hath blessed thee with his benefits; that hath spread thy table in the sight of thine enemies, and caused thy cup to overflow. (Psal. xxiii.) This is he that angels and saints do praise, and the host of heaven must magnify for ever.'

Thus do thou expatiate in the praises of God, and open his excellences to thine own heart, till thou feel the life begin to stir, and the fire in thy breast begin to kindle: as gazing upon the dusty beauty of flesh doth kindle the fire of carnal love; so this gazing on the glory and goodness of the Lord will kindle this spiritual love in thy soul. Bruising will make the spices odoriferous, and rubbing the pomander will bring forth the sweetness. Act therefore thy soul upon this delightful object; toss these cogitations frequently in thy heart, rub over all thy affections with them, as you will do your cold hands till they begin to warm; what, though thy heart be rock and flint, this often striking may bring forth the fire; but if yet thou feelest not thy love to work, lead thy heart further, and show it yet more; show it the Son of the living God, whose name is Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace; (Isa. ix. 6;) show it the King of saints on the throne of his glory, who is the First and the Last, who is, and was, and is to come; who liveth and was dead, and behold, he lives for evermore; who hath made thy peace by the blood of his cross,

and hath prepared thee, with himself, a habitation of peace: his office is to be the great peace-maker; his kingdom is a kingdom of peace; his Gospel is the tidings of peace; his voice to thee now is the voice of peace; draw near and behold him: dost thou not hear his voice? (Luke xxiv. 36—39.) He that called Thomas to come near, and to see the print of the nails, and to put his finger into his wounds, He it is that calls to thee, Come near and view the Lord thy Saviour, and be not faithless, but believing. (John xx. 27.) Peace be unto thee, fear not, it is I. (John xx. 19—21.) He that calleth, Behold me, behold me, to a rebellious people that calleth not on his name, (Isa. lix. 1,) doth call out to thee a believer to behold him; he that calls to them who pass by, to behold his sorrow in the day of his humiliation, (Lam. i. 12,) doth call now to thee to behold his glory in the day of his exaltation; look well upon him; dost thou not know him? Why, it is He that brought thee up from the pit of hell: it is He that reversed the sentence of thy damnation; that bore the curse which thou shouldst have borne, and restored thee to the blessing that thou hast forfeited and lost, and purchased the advancement which thou must inherit for ever: and yet dost thou not know him? Why, his hands were pierced, his head was pierced, his sides were pierced, his heart was pierced, with the sting of thy sins, that by these marks thou mightest always know him. Dost thou not remember when he found thee lying in thy blood, and took pity on thee, and dressed thy wounds, and brought thee home, and said unto thee, "Live?" (Ezek. xvi. 6—9; Luke x. 30, &c.) Hast thou forgotten since he wounded himself to cure thy wounds, and let out his own blood to stop thy bleeding? Is not the passage to his heart yet standing open? If thou know him not by the face, the voice, the hands, if thou know him not by the tears and bloody sweat, yet look nearer, thou mayest know him by the heart; that broken-healed heart is his; that dead-revived heart is his; that soul-pitying, melting heart is his; doubtless, it can be none's but his. Love and compassion are its certain signatures; this is He, even this is He, who would rather die than thou shouldst die, who chooses thy life before his own, who pleads his blood before his Father, and makes continual intercession for thee. If he had not suffered, O what hadst thou suffered! What hadst thou been, if he had not redeemed thee! Whither hadst thou gone, if he had not recalled thee? There was but a step between thee and hell, when he stepped in, and bore the stroke; he slew the

bear, and rescued the prey, he delivered thy soul from the roaring lion. And is not here yet fuel enough for love to feed on? Doth not this loadstone snatch thy heart unto it, and almost draw it forth of thy breast? Canst thou read the history of love any further at once? Doth not thy throbbing heart here stop to ease itself? And dost thou not, as Joseph, seek for a place to weep in? Or do not the tears of thy love bedew these lines? Go on then, for the field of love is large, it will yield thee fresh contents for ever, and be thine eternal work to behold and love: thou needest not then want work for thy present meditation. Hast thou forgotten the time when thou wast weeping, and he wiped the tears from thine eyes? when thou wast bleeding, and he wiped the blood from thy soul? when pricking cares and fears did grieve thee, and he did refresh thee, and draw out the thorns? Hast thou forgotten when thy folly did wound thy soul, and the venomous guilt did seize upon thy heart? when he sucked forth the mortal poison from thy soul, though therewith he drew it into his own? [m] I remember it is written of good Melancthon, that, when his child was removed from him, it pierced his heart to remember, how he once sat weeping with the infant on his knee, and how lovingly it wiped away the tears from his father's eyes; how then should it pierce thy heart to think how lovingly Christ hath wiped away thine! O how oft hath he found thee sitting weeping, like Hagar, while thou gavest up thy state, thy friends, thy life, yea, thy soul for lost; and he opened to thee a well of consolation, and opened thine eyes also that thou mightest see it! (Gen. xxi. 15—19.) How oft hath he found thee in the posture of Elias, sitting down under the tree forlorn and solitary, and desiring rather to die than to live; and

[m] If the love of God in us were but as the love of the world in others, it would make us wholly despise this world, and forget it, as worldly love maketh men forget God; and it would be so strong, and ardent, and rooted in a man's heart, that he would not be able voluntarily and freely to think of any thing else. He would not fear contempt, nor care for disgrace, or reproaches, or persecutions; nor would he be afraid of death itself, because of this love of God. And all things of the world, which he seeth and heareth, would bring God to his memory, and themselves would seem to him but as a dream, or a fable, and he would esteem them as nothing in respec of God and his glory. And (to be short) in the judgment of the world he would be taken for a fool or a drunken man, because he so little careth for the things of the world. This is that love of God to which we should aim to attain by this contemplative life.—*Gerson de Monte Contemplationis, in parte operum tertia*, p. 382. Memini cum infantula mihi lachrymas à genis detergeret suo indusiolo, quo uno erat induta mane: hic gestus penetravit in animum meum, &c.—*Melancthon.* epist. 457.

he hath spread thee a table of relief from heaven, and sent thee away refreshed, and encouraged to his work! (1 Kings xix. 9.) How oft hath he found thee in the trouble of the servant of Elisha, crying out, "Alas! what shall we do, for an host doth compass the city?" (2 Kings vi. 15—17;) and he hath opened thine eyes to see more for thee than against thee, both in regard of the enemies of thy soul and thy body. How oft hath he found thee in such a passion as Jonas, in thy peevish frenzy, weary of thy life! and he hath not answered passion with passion, though he might, indeed, have done well to be angry, but hath mildly reasoned thee out of thy madness, and said, "Dost thou well to be angry, or to repine against me?" How How oft hath he set thee on watching and praying, on repenting and believing, and when he hath returned, hath found thee fast asleep; (Mat. xiv. 37; Luke xxii. 45, 46;) and yet he hath not taken thee at the worst, but instead of an angry aggravation of thy fault, he hath covered it over with the mantle of love, and prevented thy over-much sorrow with a gentle excuse, "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak!" (Mark xxvi. 41.) He might have done by thee as Epaminondas by his soldier, who, finding him asleep upon the watch, ran him through with his sword, and said, "Dead I found thee, and dead I leave thee:" but he rather chose to awake thee more gently, that his tenderness might admonish thee, and keep thee watching. How oft hath he been traduced in his cause, or name, and thou hast like Peter denied him, (at least by thy silence,) whilst he hath stood in sight! Yet all the revenge he hath taken, hath been a heart-melting look, and a silent remembering thee of thy fault by his countenance. (Luke xxii. 61.) How oft hath law and conscience hailed thee before him, as the Pharisees did the adulterous woman, and laid the most heinous crimes to thy charge! And when thou hast expected to hear the sentence of death, he hath shamed away thy accusers, and put them to silence, and taken on him he did not hear thy indictment, and said to thee, "Neither do I accuse thee; go thy way, and sin no more."

And art thou not yet transported and ravished with love? Can thy heart be cool when thou thinkest of this? or can it hold when thou rememberest those boundless compassions? Rememberest thou not the time when he met thee in thy duties; when he smiled upon thee, and spake comfortably to thee? when thou didst sit down under his shadow with great delight, and when his fruit was sweet to thy taste? when he brought

thee to his banquetting-house, and his banner over thee was love? when his left-hand was under thy head, and with his right-hand he did embrace thee? And dost thou not yet cry out, "Stay me, comfort me, for I am sick of love?" (Cant. ii. 3—5.) Thus, reader, I would have thee deal with thy heart; thus hold forth the goodness of Christ to thy affections. Plead thus the case with thy frozen soul, till thou say as David in another case, "My heart was hot within me; while I was musing the fire burned." (Psalm xxxix. 3.) If these forementioned arguments will not rouse up thy love, thou hast more, enough of this nature at hand. Thou hast all Christ's personal excellencies to study; thou hast all his particular mercies to thyself, both special and common; thou hast all his sweet and near relations to thee, and thou hast the happiness of thy perpetual abode with him hereafter: all these do offer themselves to thy meditation, with all their several branches and adjuncts. Only follow them close to thy heart, ply the work, and let it not cool. Deal with thy heart, as Christ did with Peter when he asked thrice over, "Lovest thou me?" till he was grieved, and answers, "Lord, thou knowest that I love thee." (John xxi. 15—17.) So say to thy heart, Lovest thou thy Lord? and ask it the second time, and urge it the third time, Lovest thou thy Lord? till thou grieve it, and shame it out of its stupidity, and it can truly say, Thou knowest that I love him.

And thus I have showed you how to excite the affection of love.

Sect. VI. 2. The next grace or affection to be excited, is desire. The object of it is goodness, considered as absent, or not yet attained. This being so necessary an attendant of love, and being excited much by the same forementioned objective considerations, I suppose you need the less direction to be here added, and therefore I shall touch but briefly on this; if love be hot, I warrant your desire will not be cold.

When thou hast thus viewed the goodness of the Lord, and considered of the pleasures that are at his right-hand, then proceed on with thy meditation thus: think with thyself, 'Where have I been; what have I seen? O the incomprehensible astonishing glory! O the rare transcendent beauty! O blessed souls that now enjoy it; that see a thousand times more clearly what I have seen but darkly at this distance, and scarce discerned through the interposing clouds! What a difference is there betwixt my state and theirs! I am sighing, and

they are singing: I am sinning, and they are pleasing God: I have an ulcerated cancerous soul, like the loathsome bodies of Job or Lazarus, a spectacle of pity to those that behold me; but they are perfect and without blemish: I am here entangled in the love of the world, when they are taken up with the love of God: I live indeed amongst the means of grace, and I possess the fellowship of my fellow-believers; but I have none of their immediate views of God, nor any of that fellowship that they possess. They have none of my cares and fears; they weep not in secret; they languish not in sorrows; these tears are wiped away from their eyes.[n] O happy, a thousand times happy souls! Alas! that I must dwell in dirty flesh, when my brethren and companions do dwell with God! Alas! that I am lapt in earth, and tied as a mountain down to this inferior world, when they are got above the sun, and have laid aside their lumpish bodies! Alas! that I must lie, and pray and wait, and wait and pray, as if my heart were in my knees; when they do nothing but love and praise, and joy and enjoy, as if their hearts were got into the very breast of Christ, and were closely conjoined to his own heart. How far out of sight and reach and hearing of their high enjoyments do I here live, when they feel them, and feed and live upon them! What strange thoughts have I of God! what strange conceivings! what strange affections! I am fain to superscribe my best services, as the blind Athenians to the unknown God, when they are as well acquainted with him as men that live continually in his house; and as familiar in their holy praises, as if they were all one with him! What a little of that God, that Christ, that Spirit, that life, that love, that joy, have I! And how soon doth it depart and leave me in sadder darkness! Now and then a spark doth fall upon my heart, and while I gaze upon it, it straight goes out; or rather, my cold-resisting heart doth quench it: but they have their light in his light, and live conti-

[n] Facilius possumus dicere quid non sit in vita illa æterna, quam quid sit. Non est ibi mors, non est ibi luctus, non est ibi lassitudo, non est infirmitas; non est fames, nulla sitis, nullus æstus, nulla corruptio, nulla indigentia, nulla molestia, nulla tristitia: ecce diximus quid ibi non sit. Quid autem ibi sit vis nosse? Hæc nec oculus vidit, nec auris audivit, nec in cor hominis ascendit, quæ præparavit Deus diligentibus se. Si in cor hominis non ascendit, cor hominis illuc ascendat; cor ibi habeamus. Sursum corda levemus ne putrescant in terra; quoniam placet nobis quod ibi agunt angeli.—*August. de Symb.* lib. iii. chap. 11.

nually at the spring of joys. Here are we vexing each other with quarrels, and troubling our peace with discontents, when they are one in heart and voice, and daily sound forth their hallelujahs to God with full delightful harmony and consent. O what a feast hath my faith beheld; and O what a famine is yet in my spirit! I have seen a glimpse into the court of God, but, alas! I stand but as a beggar at the doors, when the souls of my companions are admitted in. O blessed souls! I may not, I dare not envy your happiness: I rather rejoice in my brethren's prosperity, and am glad to think of the day when I shall be admitted into your fellowship; but I cannot but look upon you as a child doth on his brother, who sits in the mother's lap while himself stands by, and wish that I were so happy as to be in your place; not to displace you, but to rest there with you. Why must I stay, and groan, and weep, and wait? My Lord is gone, he hath left this earth, and is entered into his glory. My brethren are gone; my friends are there; my house, my hope, my all is there? And must I stay behind to sojourn here? What precious saints have left this earth! of whom I am ready to say as Amerbachius, when he heard of the death of Zuingerus, "Piget me vivere post tantum virum, cujus magna fuit doctrina, sed exigua si cum pietate conferatur;"[o] "It is irksome to me to live after such a man whose learning was so great, and yet compared with his godliness, very small." If the saints were all here, if Christ were here, then it were no grief for me to stay; if the Bridegroom were present, who would mourn? But when my soul is so far distant from my God, wonder not what aileth me if I now complain; an ignorant Micah will do so for his idol, and shall not then my soul do so for God? (Judg. xviii. 14.) And yet if I had no hope of enjoying, I would go and hide myself in the deserts, and lie and howl in some obscure wilderness, and spend my days in fruitless wishes. But seeing it is the promised land of my rest, and the state that I must be advanced to myself, and my soul draws near, and is almost at it, I will love and long; I will look and desire; I will breathe out blessed Calvin's motto, "Usquequo, Domine." How long, Lord, how long! how long, Lord, holy and true, wilt thou suffer this soul to pant and groan: and wilt not open and let him in, who waits and longs to be with thee?[p]

Thus, christian reader, let thy thoughts aspire: thus whet the

[o] Melch. Adam in Vita Zuingeri inter vitas medicorum Germanorum.
[p] Beza in Vit. Calvin.

desires of thy soul by these meditations; till thy soul long, as David's for the waters of Bethlehem, and say, O that one would give me to drink of the wells of salvation! (2 Sam. xxiii. 15;) and till thou canst say as he, "I have longed for thy salvation, O Lord." (Psal. cxix. 174.) And as the mother and brethren of Christ, when they could not come to him because of the press, sent to him, saying, "Thy mother and brethren stand without, desiring to see thee;" send thou up the same message; tell him thou standest here without, desiring to see him; he will own thee even in these near relations; for he hath said, they that hear his word, and do it, are his mother and his brethren. (Luke viii. 20, 21.) And thus I have directed you, in the acting of your desire after your rest.

Sect. VII. 3. The next affection to be acted is hope. This is of singular use to the soul. It helpeth exceedingly to support it in sufferings; it encourageth to adventure upon the greatest difficulties; it firmly establisheth it in the most shaking trials; and it mightily enlivens the soul in duties; and is the very spring that sets all the wheels a-going: who would preach, if it were not in hope to prevail with poor sinners for their conversion and confirmation; who would pray, but for the hope to prevail with God; who would believe, or obey, or strive, or suffer, or do any thing for heaven, if it were not for the hope that he hath to obtain it? Would the mariner sail, and the merchant adventure, if they had not hope of safety and success? Would the husbandman plough, and sow, and take pains, if he had not hope of increase at harvest? Would the soldier fight, if he hoped not for victory? Surely no man doth adventure upon known impossibilities.[q] Therefore is it that they who pray merely from custom, or merely from conscience, considering it as a duty only, but looking for no great matters from God by their prayers, are generally formal and heartless therein; whereas the Christian that hath observed the wonderful success of prayer, and as verily looks for benefit by it, and thriving to his soul in the use of it, as he looks for benefit by his labours, and thriving to his body in the use of his food, how faithfully doth he follow it; and how cheerfully go through it! O how

[q] Fides intuetur verbum rei: spes autem rem verbi; ut optime distinguit Lutherus. Fides et spes concurrunt in idem rerum sperandarum objectum; fides tamen intelligendo, assentiendo, representando, id facit; spes autem patienter earum complementum expectando, id peragit quod sui muneris est. —*Jacob. Grynæus in Heb.* xi. lect. 23. p. 600.

willingly do we ministers study; how cheerfully do we preach; what life doth it put into our instructions and exhortations, when we have but hope that our labour will succeed! When we discern a people attend to the word, and regard the message, and hear them inquire what they shall do as men that are willing to be ruled by God, as men that would fain have their souls to be saved; you would not think how it helpeth us, both for invention and expression! Oh! who can choose but pray heartily for, and preach heartily to, such a people? As the sucking of the young one doth draw forth the milk, so will the people's desires and obedience draw forth the word: so that a dull people make dull preachers, and a lively people make a lively preacher. So great a force hath hope in all our duties. As hope of speeding increaseth, so doth diligence in seeking increase; beside the great conducement of it to our joy. Even the false hope of the wicked doth much support, and maintain a kind of comfort answerable to their hope; though, it is true, their hope and joy will both die with them: how much more will the saints' hopes refresh and support them! All this I have said, to show you the excellency and necessity of this grace, and so to provoke you to the more constant acting of it. If your hope dieth, your duties die, your endeavours die, your joys die, and your souls die. And if your hope be not acted, but lie asleep, it is next to dead, both in likeness and preparation.

Therefore, christian reader, when thou art winding up thy affections to heaven, do not forget to give one lift at thy hope; remember to wind up this peg also. The object of hope hath four qualifications; First, It must be good; Secondly, Future; Thirdly, Difficult; Fourthly, Yet possible. For the goodness of thy rest, there is somewhat said before, which thou mayest transfer hither as thou findest it useful; so also of the difficulty and futurity. Let faith then show thee the truth of the promise, and judgment the goodness of the thing promised; and what then is wanting for the raising of thy hope? Show thy soul from the word, and from the mercies, and from the nature of God, what possibility, yea, what probability, yea, what certainty thou hast of possessing the crown. Think thus, and reason thus, with thine own heart: Why should I not confidently and comfortably hope, when my soul is in the hands of so compassionate a Saviour; and when the kingdom is at the disposal of so bounteous a God? Did he ever manifest any backwardness to my good; or discover the least inclination to my ruin? hath he

not sworn the contrary to me in his word, that he delights not in the death of him that dieth, but rather that he should repent and live? (Ezek. xviii. 32; and xxxiii. 11.) Have not all his dealings with me witnessed the same? did he not mind me of my danger, when I never feared it? and why was this, if he would not have me to escape it? Did he not mind me of my happiness, when I had no thoughts of it: and why was this, but that he would have me to enjoy it? How oft hath he drawn me to himself, and his Christ, when I have drawn backward, and would have broken from him! what restless importunity hath he used in his suit: how hath he followed me from place to place; and his Spirit incessantly solicited my heart, with winning suggestions and persuasions for my good! And would he have done all this, if he had been willing that I should perish? If my soul were in the hands of my mortal foes, then, indeed, there were small hopes of my salvation; yea, if it were wholly in my own hands, my flesh and my folly would betray it to damnation. But have I as much cause to distrust God, as to distrust my foes, or distrust myself? surely I have not. Have I not a sure promise to build and rest on, and the truth of God engaged to fulfil it? would I not hope, if an honest man had made me a promise of any thing in his power; and shall I not hope, when I have the covenant and the oath of God? It is true, the glory is out of sight; we have not beheld the mansions of the saints: who hath ascended up to discover it, and descended to tell us what he had seen? Why, but the word is near me: have I not Moses and the prophets; Christ and his apostles? is not the promise of God more certain than our sight? It is not by sight, but by hope, that we must be saved; and hope that is seen is not hope; for if we see it, why do we yet hope for it? "But if we hope for what we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." (Rom. viii. 24, 25.) I have been ashamed of my hope in the arm of flesh, but hope in the promise of God maketh not ashamed. (Rom. v. 5.) I will say, therefore, in my greatest sufferings, with the church: "The Lord is my portion, therefore will I hope in him. The Lord is good to them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him: it is good that I both hope, and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord. It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth. I will sit alone and keep silence, because I have borne it upon me. I will put my mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope. For the Lord will not cast off for ever; but though

he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies." (Lam. iii. 24, &c.) Though I languish and die, yet will I have hope; for he hath said, "The righteous hath hope in his death." (Prov. xiv. 32.) Though I must lie down in dust and darkness, yet there "my flesh shall rest in hope." (Psal. xvi. 9.) And when my flesh hath nothing in which it may rejoice, yet will I keep "the rejoicing of hope firm to the end." (Heb. iii. 6.) For he hath said, "The hope of the righteous shall be gladness." (Prov. x. 28.) Indeed, if I had lived still under the covenant of works, and been put myself to the satisfying of that justice, then there had been no hope; but Christ hath taken down these impossibilities, and hath brought in a better hope, by which we may now draw nigh to God. (Heb. vii. 19.) Or, if I had to do with a feeble creature, there were small hope, for how could he raise this body from the dust, and lift me up above the sun? But what is it to the Almighty Power, who made the heavens and earth of nothing: cannot the same Power that raised Christ, raise me; and that hath glorified the head, also glorify the members? Doubtless, by the blood of Christ's covenant will God send forth his prisoners from the pit wherein is no water; therefore will I turn to this strong hold, as a prisoner of hope. (Zech. ix. 11, 12.)

And thus you see how meditation may excite your hope.

Sect. VIII. 4. The next affection to be acted is courage, or boldness, which leadeth to resolution, and concludeth in action. When you have thus mounted your love, and desire, and hope, go on, and think further thus with yourselves: And will God indeed dwell with men, and is there such a glory within the reach of hope? Oh! why do I not then lay hold upon it? Where is the cheerful vigour of my spirit? Why do I not gird up the loins of my mind, and play the man for such a prize? Why do I not run with speed the race before me, and set upon mine enemies on every side, and valiantly break through all resistance? Why do I not take this kingdom by force, and my fervent soul catch at the place? Do I yet sit still, and heaven before me? (1 Tim. vi. 12, 19; 1 Pet. i. 13; Heb. xii. 1; 1 Cor. ix. 24; Matt. xi. 12.) If my beast do but see his provender, if my greedy senses perceive but their delightful objects, I have much ado to stave them off; and should not my soul be as eager for such a blessed rest? Why, then, do I not undauntedly fall to work? What should stop me, or what should

dismay me? Is God with me or against me in the work? Will Christ stand by me, or will he not? If it were a way of sin that leads to death, then I might expect that God should resist me, and stand in my way with the drawn sword of his displeasure; or at least overtake me to my grief at last. But is he against the obeying of his own commands? Is perfect good against any thing but evil? Doth he bid me seek, and will he not assist me in it? Doth he set me a-work, and urge me to it, and will he after all be against me in it? It cannot be. And if he be for me, who can be against me? (Rom. viii. 31.) In the work of sin all things almost are ready to help us, and God only, and his servants, against us; and how ill doth that work prosper in our hands! But in my course to heaven, almost all things are against me; but God is for me, and how happily still doth the work succeed! Do I set upon this work in my own strength, or rather in the strength of Christ my Lord; and cannot I do all things through him that strengtheneth me? Was he ever foiled, or subdued by an enemy? He hath been assaulted indeed, but was he ever conquered? Can they take the sheep till they have overcome the shepherd? Why then doth my flesh lay open to me the difficulties, and urge me so much with the greatness and troubles of the work? It is Christ that must answer all these objections; and what are the difficulties that can stay his power? Is any thing too hard for the omnipotent God? May not Peter boldly walk on the sea, if Christ do but give the word of command; and if he begin to sink, is it from the weakness of Christ, or the smallness of his faith? The water, indeed, is but a sinking ground to tread on, but if Christ be by, and countenance us in it; if he be ready to reach us his hand, who would draw back for fear of danger? Is not sea and land alike to him? Shall I be driven from my God, and from my everlasting rest, as the silly birds are frighted from their food with a man of clouts, or a loud noise, when I know before there is no danger in it? How do I see men daily in these wars adventure upon armies, and forts, and cannons, and cast themselves upon the instruments of death; and have not I as fair a prize before me, and as much encouragement to adventure as they? What do I venture? My life at most; and in these prosperous times there is not one of many that ventures that. What do I venture on? Are they not unarmed foes? A great hazard, indeed, to venture on the hard thoughts of the world; or on the scorns and slanders of a

wicked tongue! Surely, these serpents' teeth are out; these vipers are easily shaken into the fire; these adders have no stings; these thorns have lost their prickles. As all things below are silly comforters, so are they silly, toothless, enemies; bugbears to frighten fools and children, rather than powerful, dreadful foes. Do I not well deserve to be turned into hell, if the scorns and threats of blinded men; if the fear of silly, rotten earth can drive me thither? Do I not well deserve to be shut out of heaven, if I will be frighted from it with the tongues of sinners? Surely, my own voice must needs condemn me, and my own hand subscribe the sentence, and common reason would say that my damnation were just. What, if it were father, or mother, or husband, or wife, or the nearest friend that I have in the world, if they may be called friends that would draw me to damnation, should I not run over all that would keep me from Christ? Will their friendship countervail the enmity of God; or be any comfort to my condemned soul? Shall I be yielding and pliable to the desires of men, and only harden myself against the Lord? Let men, let angels beseech me upon their knees, I will slight their tears, I will scorn to stop my course to behold them, I will shut mine ears against their cries; let them flatter, or let them frown; let them draw forth tongues and swords against me, I am resolved to break through in the might of Christ, and to look upon them all as naked dust. If they would entice me with preferment, with the kingdoms of the world, I will no more regard them than the dung of the earth. O blessed rest! O most invaluable, glorious state! Who would sell thee for dreams and shadows? Who would be enticed or affrighted from thee? Who would not strive, and fight, and watch, and run, and that with violence, even to the last breath, so he might but have hope at last to obtain thee? Surely, none but those that know thee not, and believe not thy glory. Thus you see with what kind of meditations you may excite your courage, and raise your resolutions.

Sect. IX. 5. The last affection to be acted is joy. This is the end of all the rest; love, desire, hope, and courage, do all tend to the raising of our joy. This is so desirable to every man by nature, and is so essentially necessary to the constituting of his happiness, that I hope I need not say much to persuade you to any thing that would make your life delightful. Supposing you, therefore, already convinced, that the pleasures of the flesh are brutish and perishing, and that your solid and

lasting joy must be from heaven; instead of persuading, I shall proceed in directing.

Well, then, by this time, if thou hast managed well the former work, thou art got within the ken of thy rest; thou believest the truth of it; thou art convinced of the excellency of it; thou art fallen in love with it; thou longest after it; thou hopest for it; and thou art resolved courageously to venture for the obtaining it: but is here any work for joy in this? We delight in the good which we do possess. It is present good that is the object of joy; but thou wilt say 'Alas! I am yet without it!' Well, but yet think a little further with thyself. Though the real presence do afford the choicest joy, yet the presence of its imperfect idea, or image in thy understanding, may afford me a great deal of true delight. Is it nothing to have a deed of gift from God? Are his infallible promises no ground of joy? Is it nothing to live in daily expectation of entering into the kingdom? Is not my assurance of being glorified one of these days a sufficient ground for inexpressible joy? Is it no delight to the heir of a kingdom to think of what he must hereafter possess, though at present he little differ from a servant? (Gal. iv. 1.) Am I not commanded to rejoice in hope of the glory of God? (Rom. v. 2, and xii. 12.)

Here, then, reader, take thy heart once again, as it were, by the hand; bring it to the top of the highest mount; if it be possible, to some atlas above the clouds. Show it the kingdom of Christ, and the glory of it. Say to it, 'All this will thy Lord bestow upon thee, who hast believed in him, and been a worshipper of him.' It is the Father's good pleasure to give thee this kingdom. Seest thou this astonishing glory above thee? Why, all this is thy own inheritance; this crown is thine; these pleasures are thine; this company, this beauteous place is thine; all things are thine, because thou art Christ's, and Christ is thine; when thou wast married to him, thou hadst all this with him.

Thus, take thy heart into the land of promise, show it the pleasant hills and fruitful valleys; show it the clusters of grapes which thou hast gathered; and by those convince it that it is a blessed land, flowing with better than milk and honey: enter the gates of the holy city, walk through the streets of the new Jerusalem, walk about Sion, go round about her, tell the towers thereof, mark well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, that thou

mayest tell it to thy soul. (Psal. xlviii. 12, 13.) Hath it not the glory of God, and is not her light like to a stone most precious? See the twelve foundations of her walls, and the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb therein. The building of the walls of it are of jasper, and the city of pure gold, as clear as glass. The foundation is garnished with precious stones, and the twelve gates are twelve pearls. Every several gate is of one pearl, and the street of the city is pure gold, as it were transparent glass; there is no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb, are the temple of it. It hath no need of sun or moon to shine in it, for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof, and the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it. These sayings are faithful and true, and the Lord God of the holy prophets hath sent his angels and his own Son, to show unto his servants the things that must shortly be done. (Rev. xxi. 11—13, &c. to the end, and xxii. 6.) What sayest thou now to all this? This is thy rest, O my soul, and this must be the place of thy everlasting habitation. "Let all the sons of Sion then rejoice, and the daughters of Jerusalem be glad: for great is the Lord, and greatly is he praised in the city of our God: beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth is mount Sion: God is known in her palaces for a refuge." (Psalm xlviii. 11, 1—3.)

Yet proceed on; "Anima quæ amat ascendit," &c. The soul, saith Austin, that loves, ascends frequently, and runs familiarly through the streets of the heavenly Jerusalem, visiting the patriarchs and prophets, saluting the apostles, admiring the armies of martyrs and confessors, &c. So do thou, lead on thy heart as from street to street, bringing it into the palace of the great King; lead it, as it were, from chamber to chamber; say to it, 'Here must I lodge, here must I live, here must I praise, here must I love, and be beloved; I must shortly be one of this heavenly choir; I shall then be better skilled in the music. Among this blessed company must I take my place. My voice must join to make up the melody. My tears will then be wiped away, my groans turned to another tune. My cottage of clay will be changed to this palace, and my prison rags to these splendid robes. My sordid, nasty, stinking flesh shall be put off, and such a sun-like spiritual body put on. For the former things are done away. "Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God." (Psalm lxxxvii. 3.) There it is that trouble and lamentation ceaseth, and the voice of sorrow is not heard. Oh! when I look upon this glorious place, what a dunghill and dungeon methinks is

earth. Oh! what a difference betwixt a man feeble, pained, groaning, dying, rotting in the grave, and one of these triumphant, blessed, shining saints! Here shall I drink of the river of pleasure, "the streams whereof make glad the city of our God." "For the Lord will create a new Jerusalem and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. We shall be glad and rejoice for ever in that which he creates: for he will create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy: and he will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in his people, and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days." (Isa. lxv. 17—20.) Must Israel, on earth, under the bondage of the law, serve the Lord with joyfulness and gladness of heart, because of the abundance of all things which they possess? surely, then, I shall serve him with joyfulness and gladness, who shall have another kind of service, and of abundance in glory. (Deut. xxviii. 47.) Did the saints take joyfully the spoiling of their goods? (Heb. xi. 34.) And shall not I take joyfully the receiving of my good, and such a full reparation of all my losses? Was it such a remarkable, celebrated day, when the Jews rested from their enemies, because it was turned to them from sorrow to joy, and from mourning into a good day? (Esther ix. 22.) What a day, then, will that be to my soul, whose rest and change will be so much greater! When the wise men saw but the star of Christ, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy; (Matt. ii. 10;) but I shall shortly see the Star of Jacob, even himself who is the bright and morning Star. (Numb. xxiv. 17; Rev. xxii. 16.) If they returned from the sepulchre with great joy, when they had but heard that he was risen from the dead; (Matt. xxviii. 8;) what joy, then, will it be to me, when I shall see him risen and reigning in his glory, and myself raised to a blessed communion with him? Then shall we have beauty for ashes indeed, and the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness: (Isa. lxi. 3:) when he hath made Sion an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations. (Isa. lx. 15.)

Why do I not, then, arise from the dust, and lay aside my sad complaints, and cease my doleful, mourning note? Why do I not trample down vain delights, and feed upon the foreseen delights of glory? Why is not my life a continual joy, and the savour of heaven perpetually upon my spirit? And thus, reader, I have directed thee in acting thy joy.

Sect. 10. Here also, when thou findest cause, thou hast a sin-

gular good advantage from thy meditations of heaven, for the acting of the contrary and more mixed passions; as:

1. Of thy hatred and detestation of sin, which would deprive thy soul of these immortal joys.

2. Of thy godly and filial fear, lest thou shouldst either abuse or hazard this mercy.

3. Of thy necessary grief, for such thy foolish abuse and hazard.

4. Of thy godly shame, which should cover thy face for the forementioned folly.

5. Of thy unfeigned repentance for what thou hast done against thy joys.

6. Of thy holy anger or indignation against thyself for such miscarriage.

7. Of the zeal and jealousy over thy heart, lest thou shouldst again be drawn to the like iniquity.

8. And of thy pity toward those who are ignorantly walking in the contrary course, and in apparent danger of losing all this.

But I will confine myself to the former chief affections, and not meddle with these, lest I be too prolix, but leave them to thy own spiritual prudence.

I would here also have thee to understand that I do not place any flat necessity in thy acting of all the forementioned affections in this order at one time, or in one duty. Perhaps thou mayest sometimes feel some one of thy affections more flat than the rest, and so to have more need of exciting: or thou mayest find one stirring more than the rest, and so think it more seasonable to help it forward! or, if thy time be short, thou mayest work upon one affection one day, and upon another the next, as thou findest cause. All this I still leave to thy own prudence.

And so I have done with the third part of the direction, viz. what powers of the soul are here to be acted, what affections excited, by what objective considerations, and in what order.

CHAP. X.

By what Actings of the Soul to proceed in this work of Heavenly Contemplation.

FOURTHLY, The fourth part of this directory is, to show you how and by what acts you should advance on to the height of this work.

Sect. I. The first and main instrument of this work is, that cogitation, or consideration, which I before have opened, and which is to go along with us through the whole. But because mere cogitation, if it be not pressed home, will not so pierce and affect the heart; therefore we must here proceed to a second step, which is called soliloquy, which is nothing but a pleading the case with our own souls. As in preaching to others, the bare propounding and opening of truths and duties, doth seldom find that success as the lively application; so it is also in meditating and propounding truths to ourselves. The moving, pathetical pleadings with a sinner, will make him deeply affected with a common truth, which before, though he knew it, yet it never stirred him. What heart-meltings do we see under powerful application, when the naked explication did little move them? If any where there be a tender-hearted, affectionate people, it is likely, under such a moving, close-applying ministry. Why, thus must thou do in thy meditation to quicken thine own heart: enter into a serious debate with it: plead with it in the most moving and affecting language: urge it with the most weighty and powerful arguments: this soliloquy, or self-conference, hath been the practice of the holy men of God in all times: (Gen. xlix. 6; Judges v. 21; Psal. xvi. 2; and Jer. iv. 19.) How doth David plead with his soul against its dejections, and argue it into a holy confidence and comfort! "Why art thou cast down, O my soul; and why art thou so disquieted within me? Trust in God, for I shall yet give him thanks, who is the health of my countenance, and my God." (Psal. xlii. 5, 11, and xliii. 5.) So in Psal. ciii. 1, 2, &c. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits," &c. So doth he also end the Psalm, and so doth he begin and end Psal. civ.; so Psal. cxlvi. 1; and cxvi. 7, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee." The like you may see in the meditations of holy men of latter times, as Austin, Bernard, &c.: so that this is no new path which I persuade you to tread, but that which the saints have ever used in their meditation.

Sect. II. This soliloquy hath its several parts, and its due method wherein it should be managed. The parts of it are according to the several affections of the soul, and according to the several necessities thereof, according to the various arguments to be used, and according to the various ways of arguing.

So that you see if I should attempt the full handling hereof, it would take up more time and room than I intend or can allow it. Only thus much in brief: As every good master and father of a family is a good preacher to his own family, so every good Christian is a good preacher to his own soul. Soliloquy is a preaching to one's self; therefore the very same method which a minister should use in his preaching to others, should a Christian use in speaking to himself. Dost thou understand the best method for a public preacher? Dost thou know the right parts and order of a sermon; and which is the most effectual way of application? Why then I need to lay it open no further; thou understandest the method and parts of this soliloquy. Mark the most affecting, heart-melting minister; observe his course, both for matter and manner; set him as a pattern before thee for thy imitation; and the same way that he takes with the hearts of his people, do thou also take with thy own heart. Men are naturally addicted to imitation, especially of those whom they most affect and approve of: how near do some ministers come in their preaching to the imitation of others, whom they usually hear, and much reverence and value; so mayest thou in this duty of preaching to thy heart. Art thou not ready sometime when thou hearest a minister, to remember divers things which thou thinkest might be moving and pertinent, and to wish that he would have mentioned and pressed them on the hearers? Why, remember those when thou art exhorting thyself, and press them on thy own heart as close as thou canst.

As, therefore, this is accounted the most familiar method in preaching, so it is for thee in meditating: First, Explain to thyself the subject on which thou dost meditate, both the terms and the subject matter; study the difficulties, till the doctrine is clear. Secondly, Then confirm thy faith in the belief of it, by the most clear, convincing scripture reasons. Thirdly, Then apply it according to its nature and thy necessity. As in the case we are upon, that there is a rest remaining for the people of God.

1. Consider of the useful consectaries, or conclusions, that thence arise, for the clearing and confirming of thy judgment, which is commonly called a use of information. Here thou mayest press them also by other confirming arguments, and adjoin the confutation of the contrary errors.

2. Proceed then to consider of the duties which do appear to

be such from the doctrine in hand, which is commonly called a use of instruction, as also the reprehension of the contrary vices.

3. Then proceed to question, and try thyself, how thou hast valued this glory of the saints; how thou hast loved it; and how thou hast laid out thyself to obtain it. This is called a use of examination. Here thou mayest also make use of discovering signs, drawn from the nature, properties, effects, adjuncts, &c.

4. So far as this trial hath discovered thy neglect, and other sins against this rest, proceed to the reprehension and censuring of thyself; chide thy heart for its omissions and commissions, and do it sharply till it feel the smart; as Peter preached reproof to his hearers, till they were pricked to the heart and cried out: and as a father or master will chide the child till it begin to cry and be sensible of the fault; so do thou in chiding thy own heart: this is called a use of reproof. Here also it will be very necessary that thou bring forth all the aggravating circumstances of the sin, that thy heart may feel it in its weight and bitterness; and if thy heart do evade or deny the sin, convince it by producing the several discoveries.

5. So far as thou discoverest that thou hast been faithful in the duty, turn it to encouragement to thyself, and to thanks to God; where thou mayest consider of the several aggravations of the mercy of the Spirit's enabling thee thereto.

6. So, as it respects thy duty for the future, consider how thou mayest improve this comfortable doctrine, which must be by strong and effectual persuasion with thy heart. First, By way of dehortation from the fore-mentioned sins. Secondly, By way of exhortation to the several duties. And these are either, first, internal, or secondly, external. First, therefore, admonish thy heart of its own inward neglects and contempts; Secondly, And then of the neglects and trespasses in thy practice against this blessed state of rest. Set home these several admonitions to the quick; take thy heart as to the brink of the bottomless pit; force it to look in, threaten thyself with the threatenings of the word; tell it of the torments that it draweth upon itself; tell it what joys it is madly rejecting; force it to promise thee to do so no more, and that not with a cold and heartless promise, but earnestly with most solemn asseverations and engagements. Secondly, The next and last is, to drive on thy soul to those positive duties, which are required of thee in relation to

this rest: as First, To the inward duties of thy heart, and there First, To be diligent in making sure of this rest: Secondly, To rejoice in the expectation of it: this is called a use of consolation. It is to be furthered by first laying open the excellency of the state; and secondly, the certainty of it in itself; and thirdly, our own interest in it; by clearing and proving all these, and confuting all saddening objections that may be brought against them: Thirdly, so also for the provoking of love, of hope, and all other the affections in the way before more largely opened.

And, Secondly, Press on thy heart also to all outward duties that are to be performed in thy way to rest, whether in worship or in civil conversation, whether public or private, ordinary or extraordinary: this is commonly called a use of exhortation. Here bring in all quickening considerations, either those that may drive thee, or those that may draw; which work by fear, or which work by desire; these are commonly called motives; but above all, be sure that thou follow them home; ask thy heart what it can say against the duty; Is there weight in them, or is there not? And then, what it can say against the duty, Is it necessary; is it comfortable; or is it not? When thou hast silenced thy heart, and brought it to a stand, then drive it further, and urge it to a promise, as suppose it were to the duty of meditation, which we are speaking of; force thyself beyond these lazy purposes; resolve on the duty before thou stir; enter into a solemn covenant to be faithful; let not thy heart go, till it have, without all halting and reservations, flatly promised thee, that it will fall to the work; write down this promise, show it to thy heart the next time it loiters; then study also the helps and means, the hinderances and directions, that concern thy duty. And this is in brief the exercise of this soliloquy, or the preaching of heaven to thy heart.

Sect. III. Object. But perhaps thou wilt say, Every man cannot understand this method; this is for ministers and learned men; every man is not able to play the preacher. I answer thee, First, There is not that ability required to this, as is to the work of public preaching: here thy thoughts may serve the turn, but there must be also the decent ornaments of language: here is needful but an honest, understanding heart, but there must be a good pronunciation, and a voluble tongue: here if thou miss of the method, thou mayest make up that in one piece of application which thou hast neglected in another: but there thy

failings are injurious to many, and a scandal and disgrace to the work of God. Thou knowest what will fit thy own heart, and what arguments take best with thy own affections; but thou art not so well acquainted with the dispositions of others. Secondly, I answer further, Every man is bound to be skilful in the Scriptures as well as ministers: kings, and magistrates; (Deut. xvii. 18—20; Josh. i. 8;) and the people also. (Deut. vi. 6—8.) Do you think, if you did as is there commanded, write it upon thy heart, lay them up in thy soul, bind them upon thy hand, and between thine eyes, meditate on them day and night: I say, if you did thus, would you not quickly understand as much as this? (See Psal. i. 3; Deut. xi. 18, and vi. 6—8.) Doth not God command thee to teach them diligently to thy children; and to talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up? And if thou must be skilled to teach thy children, much more to teach thyself; and if thou canst talk of them to others, why not also to thine own heart? Certainly, our unskilfulness and disability, both in a methodical and lively teaching of our families, and of ourselves, is for the most part merely through our own negligence, and a sin for which we have no excuse: you that learn the skill of your trades and sciences, might learn this also, if you were but willing and painful.

And so I have done with this particular of soliloquy.

Sect. IV. 2. Another step to arise by in our contemplation, is, from this speaking to ourselves, to speak to God: prayer is not such a stranger to this duty, but that ejaculatory requests may be intermixed or added, and that as a very part of the duty itself. How oft doth David intermix these in his psalms, sometime pleading with his soul, and sometime with God, and that in the same psalm, and in the next verses? The apostle bids us speak to ourselves in psalms and hymns; and no doubt we may also speak to God in them; this keeps the soul in mind of the divine presence, it tends also exceedingly to quicken and raise it: so that as God is the highest object of our thoughts, so our viewing of him, and our speaking to him, and pleading with him, doth more elevate the soul, and actuate the affections, than any other part of meditation can do. Men that are careless of their carriage and speeches among children and idiots, will be sober and serious with princes or grave men; so, though while we do but plead the case with ourselves, we are careless and unaffected, yet when we turn our speech to God, it may

strike us with awfulness; and the holiness and majesty of him whom we speak to, may cause both the matter and words to pierce the deeper. Isaac went forth to pray, the former translation saith; to meditate, saith the latter; the Hebrew verb, saith Paræus in loc., signifieth both *ad orandum et meditandum.*[r] The men of God, both former and latter, who have left their meditations on record for our view, have thus intermixed soliloquy and prayer; sometime speaking to their own hearts, and sometime turning their speech to God: and though this may seem an indifferent thing, yet I conceive it very suitable and necessary, and that it is the highest step that we can advance to in the work.

Object. But why then is it not as good to take up with prayer alone, and to save all this tedious work that you prescribe us?

Answ. 1. They are several duties, and therefore must be performed both. Secondly, We have need of one as well as the other, and therefore shall wrong ourselves in the neglecting of either. Thirdly, The mixture, as in music, doth more affect; the one helps on, and puts life into the other. Fourthly, It is not the right order to begin at the top, therefore meditation and speaking to ourselves, should go before prayer, or speaking to God; want of this, makes prayer with most to have little more than the name of prayer, and men to speak as lightly and as stupidly to the dreadful God, as if it were to one of their companions, and with far less reverence and affection than they would speak to an angel, if he should appear to them, yea, or to a judge or prince, if they were speaking for their lives: and consequently their success and answers are often like their prayers. Oh! speaking to the God of heaven in prayer, is a weightier duty than most are aware of.

Sect. V. The ancients had a custom, by apostrophes and prosopopœias, to speak, as it were, to angels and saints departed, which, as it was used by them, I take to be lawful; but what they spoke in rhetorical figures, was interpreted by the succeeding ages to be spoken in strict propriety; and doctrinal conclusions for praying to saints and angels were raised from their speeches; therefore I will omit that course, which is so little necessary, and so subject to scandalize the less judicious readers.

And so much for the fourth part of the direction, by what

[r] LXX legunt ἀδολεσχῆται, ad ludendum, se exercendum, sed aliene inquit Paræus.

steps or acts we must advance to the height of this work: I should clear all this by some examples, but that I intend shall follow in the end.

CHAP. XI.

Some Advantages and Helps, for raising and affecting the Soul by this Meditation.

SECT. I. Fifthly: The fifth part of this directory is, to show you what advantages you should take, and what helps you should use, to make your meditations of heaven more quickening, and to make you taste the sweetness that is therein. For that is the main work that I drive at through all; that you may not stick in a bare thinking, but may have the lively sense of all upon your hearts; and this you will find to be the most difficult part of the work: and that it is easier barely to think of heaven a whole day, than to be lively and affectionate in those thoughts one quarter of an hour. Therefore let us yet a little further consider what may be done, to make your thoughts of heaven to be piercing, affecting, raising thoughts.

Here, therefore, you must understand, that the mere pure work of faith hath many disadvantages with us, in comparison of the work of sense. Faith is imperfect, for we are renewed but in part; but sense hath its strength, according to the strength of the flesh: faith goes against a world of resistance, but sense doth not. Faith is supernatural, and therefore prone to declining, and to languish both in the habit and exercise, further than it is still renewed and excited; but sense is natural, and therefore continueth while nature continueth. The object of faith is far off; we must go as far as heaven for our joys;[a] but the object of sense is close at hand. It is no easy matter to rejoice at that which we never saw, nor ever knew the man that did see it: and this upon a mere promise which is written in the Bible: and that when we have nothing else to rejoice in,

[a] De coloribus cæcus loquelam habet, sensum autem non habet, teste Aristot. Non secus circa illa quæ divina et æterna sunt, se habet humanus intellectus, infirmus et cæcutiens, ut vere quantum fas est, prædestinationis æternæ, et libertatis nostræ compossibilitatem teneamus, &c.—*Arriba Concil. de Grat.* lib. i. cap. 30. p. 188.

but all our sensible comforts do fail us; but to rejoice in that which we see and feel, in that which we have hold of, and possession already, this is not difficult. Well, then, what should be done in this case? why, surely it will be a point of our spiritual prudence, and a singular help to the furthering of the work of faith, to call in our sense to its assistance:[t] if we can make us friends of these usual enemies, and make them instruments of raising us to God, which are the usual means of drawing us from God, I think we shall perform a very excellent work. Surely it is both possible and lawful, yea, and necessary too, to do something in this kind: for God would not have given us either our senses themselves, or their usual objects, if they might not have been serviceable to his own praise, and helps to raise us up to the apprehension of higher things: and it is very considerable, how the Holy Ghost doth condescend to the phrase of Scripture, in bringing things down to the reach of sense; how he sets forth the excellencies of spiritual things in words that are borrowed from the objects of sense; how he describeth the glory of the New Jerusalem, in expressions that might take even with flesh itself: as that the streets and buildings are pure gold, that the gates are pearl, that a throne doth stand in the midst of it, &c. (Rev. xxi. 22.) That we shall eat and drink with Christ at his table in his kingdom; that he will drink with us the fruit of the vine new; that we shall shine as the sun in the firmament of our Father: these, with most other descriptions of our glory, are expressed as if it were to the very flesh and sense; which, though they are all improper and figurative, yet doubtless if such expressions had not been best, and to us necessary, the Holy Ghost would not have so frequently used them: he that will speak to man's understanding, must speak in man's language, and speak that which he is capable to conceive. And, doubtless, as the Spirit doth speak, so we must hear; and if our necessity cause him to condescend in his expressions, it must needs cause us to be low in our conceivings.[u] Those conceivings

[t] Quanta libet intentione se humana mens extenderet, etiamsi phantasiae imaginum corporalium à cognitione compescat, si omnes circumscriptos spiritus ad oculos cordis admoveat, adhuc tamen in carne mortali posita videre gloriam Dei non valet, sicut est. Sed quicquid de illa quod in mente resplendet, similitudo, et non ipsa est.—*Greg. sup.* hom. 8. Utile tamen est ut in hujusmodi rationibus quantumcunque debilimus se mens humana exerceat, dummodo desit comprehendendi vel demonstrandi præsumptio: quia de rebus altissimis etiam parva et debili consideratione aliquid posse inspicere jucundissimum est.—*Aquin. cont. Gentil.* lib. i. cap. 8.

[u] Æquum est meminisse, et me qui disseram, et vos qui judicabitis, ho-

and expressions which we have of spirits, and things merely spiritual, they are commonly but second notions, without the first; but mere names that are put into our mouths, without any true conceivings of the things which they signify; or our conceivings which we express by those notions or terms, are merely negative: what things are not, rather than what they are; as, when we mention spirits, we mean they are not corporal substances, but what they are, we can tell no more, than we know what is Aristotle's 'Materia Prima.' It is one reason of Christ's assuming and continuing our nature with the Godhead, that we might know him the better, when he is so much nearer to us; and we might have more positive conceivings of him, and so our minds might have familiarity with him, who before was quite beyond our reach.

But what is my scope in all this? is it that we might think heaven to be made of gold and pearl; or, that we should picture Christ as the papists do, in such a shape;[x] or, that we should think saints and angels do indeed eat and drink? No; not that we should take the Spirit's figurative expressions to be meant according to strict propriety;[y] or have fleshly conceivings of spiritual things, so as to believe them to be such indeed: but thus to think, that to conceive or speak of them in strict

mines esse, ut si probabilia dicentur, nihil ulterius requiratis.—*Plato in Timæo.* Idem in Epistola ad Dionys. monet, ut eos tanquam barathrum declinet, qui de Diis tanquam de ils qui manibus teneri et apprehendi possunt, certas exigunt demonstrationes. Et in Phædone eo nomine gravissime reprehendit eos quod ambitiosis inter se verborum pugnis et inani demonstrationum conatu, principes se novorum et pugnantium dogmatum constituant, de rebus ipsis nihil certum, nihil stabile, nihil firmum habeant. Ipseque suam deplorat cæcitatem, qui quæ se prius perspicue scire existimaret, ne per umbram quidem sibi unquam visa esse compererit. Et quorum aliquam esse ratus fuerat soliditatem, ea nunc omnia non secus ac inanes somniorum imagines vanescere.

[x] Ex operibus quidem opificem, hanc causam effectoremque mundi Deum nosse datur. Ex imagine autem et simulacro (ut Socratis auditor Antisthenes dicebat) is non agnoscitur; nullis oculis conspicuus, nulli rei similis, ut ex ulla effigie nosci possit. Atque (ut a Zenophonte Socratico scriptum legimus, qui cuncta concussat, ipse intrepidus et inconcussus. Magnus nimirum potensque esse cognoscitur. Quali autem sit facie, ignoratur.—*Fernelius de Abditis Rerum Causis*, cap. 9.

[y] Est quidem et de communibus sensibus, sapere in Dei rebus; sed in testimonium veri, non in adjutorium falsi. Quod sit secundum divinam, non contra divinam dispositionem.—*Tertullian. Lib. de Resurrect. Carnis*, cap. 3. p. 407. Hæc omnia ab humanis in Deum qualitatibus tracta sunt, dum ad nostræ infirmitatis verba descenditur. Ut quasi quibusdam nobis gradibus factis, et juxta nos positis, per ea quæ nobis vicina conspicimus, ad summa ejus casendere quandoque valeamus.—*Gregor. Moral.* lib. xx. cap. 14.

propriety, is utterly beyond our reach and capacity; and therefore we must conceive of them as we are able; and that the Spirit would not have represented them in these notions to us, but that we have no better notions to apprehend them by; and therefore that we make use of these phrases of the Spirit to quicken our apprehensions and affections, but not to prevent them; and use these low notions as a glass, in which we must see the things themselves, though the representation be exceeding imperfect, till we come to an immediate perfect sight; yet still concluding, that these phrases, though useful, are but borrowed and improper. The like may be said of those expressions of God in Scripture, wherein he represents himself in the imperfections of creatures, as anger, repenting, willing what shall not come to pass, &c. Though these be improper, drawn from the manner of men, yet there is somewhat in God which we can see no better yet, than in this glass, and which we can no better conceive of, than in such notions, or else the Holy Ghost would have given us better.

Sect. II. 1. Go to, then, when thou settest thyself to meditate on the joys above, think on them boldly, as Scripture hath expressed them; bring down thy conceivings to the reach of sense. Excellency without familiarity doth amaze more than delight us; but love and joy are promoted by familiar acquaintance. When we go about to think of God and glory in proper conceivings, without these spectacles we are lost, and have nothing to fix our thoughts upon. We set God and heaven so far from us, that our thoughts are strange, and we look at them as things beyond our reach, and beyond our line, and are ready to say, That which is above is nothing to us; to conceive no more of God and glory, but that we cannot conceive them, and to apprehend no more, but that they are past our apprehension, will produce no more love but this,—to acknowledge that they are so far above us that we cannot love them; and no more joy but this,—that they are above our rejoicing. And therefore put Christ no further from you than he hath put himself, lest the divine nature be again inaccessible. Think of Christ as in our own nature glorified; think of our fellow-saints as men there perfected; think of the city and state as the spirit hath expressed it, only with the cautions and limitations before mentioned.[s] Suppose thou wert now beholding this city of

[s] Ibi jacet gratia, ibi virentibus campis terro luxurians alumna se induit gramine, et redolente pascitur flore. Ibi altum nemora tolluntur in verti-

God, and that thou hadst been companion with John in his survey of its glory; and hadst seen the thrones, the majesty, the heavenly hosts, the shining splendour which he saw; draw as strong suppositions as may be from thy sense for the helping of thy affections. It is lawful to suppose we did see for the present, that which God hath in prophecies revealed, and which we must really see in more unspeakable brightness before long. Suppose, therefore, with thyself thou hadst been that apostle's fellow-traveller into the celestial kingdom, and that thou hadst seen all the saints in their white robes, with palms in their hands; suppose thou hadst heard those songs of Moses and of the Lamb; or didst even now hear them praising and glorifying the living God. If thou hadst seen these things, indeed, in what a rapture wouldst thou have been! And the more seriously thou puttest this supposition to thyself, the more will the meditation elevate thy heart. I would not have thee, as the papists, draw them in pictures, nor use such ways to represent them. This, as it is a course forbidden by God, so it would but seduce and draw down thy heart; but get the liveliest picture of them in thy mind that possibly thou canst; meditate of them as if thou wert all the while beholding them, and as if thou wert even hearing the hallelujahs, while thou art thinking of them; till thou canst say, Methinks I see a glimpse of the glory; methinks I hear the shouts of joy and praise; methinks I even stand by Abraham and David, Peter and Paul, and more of these triumphing souls; methinks I even see the Son of God appearing in the clouds, and the world standing at his bar to receive their doom; methinks I hear him say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father," and even see them go rejoicing into the joy of their Lord. My very dreams of these things have deeply affected me, and should not these just suppositions affect me much more? What, if I had seen, with Paul, those unutterable things, should I not have been exalted, and that, perhaps, above measure, as well as he? What, if I had stood in the room of Stephen, and seen heaven opened, and Christ

cem, et ibi arbor densiore coma vestitur, quicquid curvantibus ramis scena dejacens inumbrarit. Omnia illic non frigoris nec ardoris, nec uti in autumno arva requiescant, aut ut iterum vere novo tellus fœcunda parturiat. Unius cuncta sunt temporis. Unius poma feruntur æstatis; quippe cum nec mensibus suis tunc luna deserviat, nec sol per horarum momenta decurrat, aut in noctem lux fugata concedat. Habet populos quies læta. Sedes tenet placidas, ubi fons scaturiens medio sinu alvei prorumpentis emergit, et rauco per intervalla circuitu sinuosis flexibus labitur, ut iis ora nascentium ibi fluminum dividatur.—*Cyprian. de Laude Martyr.*

sitting at the right-hand of God? Surely that one sight was worth the suffering his storm of stones. Oh, that I might but see what he did see, though I also suffered what he did suffer! What, if I had seen such a sight as Micaiah saw: the Lord sitting upon his throne, and all the hosts of heaven standing on his right-hand and on his left? Why, these men of God did see such things; and I shall shortly see far more than ever they saw till they were loosed from this flesh, as I must be. And thus you see how the familiar conceiving of the state of blessedness, as the Spirit hath in a condescending language expressed it, and our strong raising of suppositions from our bodily senses will further our affections in this heavenly work.

Sect. III. 2. There is yet another way by which we may make our senses here serviceable to us, and that is, by comparing of the objects of sense with the objects of faith; and so forcing sense to afford us that medium, from whence we may conclude the transcendent worth of glory, by arguing from sensitive delights as from the less to the greater. And here for your further assistance, I shall furnish you with some of these comparative arguments.

And First, You must strongly argue with your hearts, from the corrupt delights of sensual men.[a] Think, then, with yourselves when you would be sensible of the joys above: Is it such a delight to a sinner to do wickedly, and will it not be delightful, indeed, then to live with God? Hath a very drunkard[b]

[a] If the men of the world, who have the spirit of the world, are so desirous to see an earthly king, at least in all his ornaments and glory, &c., how much more should they desire to see Christ; into whom the drops of the quickening Spirit of the Godhead hath instilled, and whose hearts he hath wounded with a divine love to Christ the heavenly King! They are enchained in that beauty and unspeakable glory, in that incorruptible splendour and incomprehensible riches of the true and eternal King, Christ: with desire and longings after whom they are wholly taken up, being wholly turned to him, and long to attain that inexpressible blessedness, which by the Spirit they behold; for the sake of which they esteem all the beauty, and ornaments, and glory, and riches, and honour of kings and princes, but as nothing. For they are wounded with the beauty of God, and the heavenly life of immortality hath dropped into their souls. *Ergo* do they wish for the love of the heavenly King; and having him alone before their eyes in all their desires, they rid themselves by him of all worldly love, and depart from all terrene engagements, that so they may still keep that desire alone in their hearts.—*Macarius*, Homil. 5. a.

[b] Quæ ergo nos augit vesania, vitiorum sitire absinthium, hujus mundi sequi naufragium, vitæ præsentis pati infortunium, impiæ tyrannidis ferre dominium, et non magis convolare ad sanctorum felicitatem, ad angelorum societatem, ad solemnitatem supernæ lætitiæ, et ad jucunditatem contemplativæ vitæ, ut possimus intrare in potentias Domini, et videre superabundantes divitias bonitatis ejus?—*Bernard. de Præmio Pat. Cœlest.*

such a delight in his cups and his companions, that the very fears of damnation will not make him forsake them? Hath the brutish whoremaster such delight in his whore, that he will part with his credit, and estate, and salvation, rather than he will part with her? Surely, then, there are high delights with God. If the way to hell can afford such pleasure, what are the pleasures of the saints in heaven? if the covetous man hath so much pleasure in his wealth, and the ambitious man in power and titles of honour, what then have the saints in the everlasting treasure? and what pleasure do the heavenly honours afford, where we shall be set above principalities and powers, and be made the glorious spouse of Christ? What pleasure do the voluptuous find in their sensual courses? How closely will they follow their hunting, and hawking, and other recreations, from morning to night! How delightfully will they sit at their cards and dice, hours and days and nights together! O the delight that must needs then be in beholding the face of the living God, and in singing forth praises to him and the Lamb, which must be our recreation when we come to our rest!

Sect. IV. 2. Compare also the delights above with the lawful delights of moderated senses.[c] Think with thyself, How sweet is food to my taste when I am hungry, especially, as Isaac said, that which my soul loveth, that which my temperature and appetite do incline to! What delight hath the taste in some pleasant fruits; in some relished meats, and in divers junkets! Oh, what delight, then, must my soul needs have in feeding upon Christ, the living bread, and in eating with him at his table in his kingdom! Was a mess of pottage so sweet to Esau, in his hunger, that he would buy them at so dear a rate as his birth-right? How highly then should I value this never-perishing food! How pleasant is drink in the extremity of thirst! The delight of it to a man in a fever, or other drought, can scarcely be expressed. It will make the strength of Sampson revive. Oh, then, how delightful will it be to my soul to drink of that fountain of living water, which whoso drinks shall

[c] Si homines de gaudio terreno jubilant, nos de gaudio cœlesti jubilare non debemus, quod verbis vere explicare non possumus? Et quem decet ista jubilatio nisi ineffabilem Deum? Et si Deum fari non potes et tacere non debes; quid restat nisi ut jubiles?—*August. in Psalm* xciv. Si consideremus quæ et quanta sunt quæ sanctis dabuntur in die judicii, quæ et quanta quæ nobis promittuntur in cœlis, vilescent omnia quæ habentur in terris. Terrena namque substantia, æternæ felicitati comparata, pondus est, non subsidium.—*Gregor. in Homil.*

thirst no more! So pleasant is wine, and so refreshing to the spirits, that it is said to make glad the heart of man: how pleasant, then, will that wine of the great marriage be; even that wine which our water was turned into; that best wine, which will be kept till then! How delightful are pleasing odours to our smell! How delightful is perfect music to the ear! How delightful are beauteous sights to the eye; such as curious pictures, sumptuous, adorned, well-contrived buildings; handsome, necessary rooms, walks, prospects; gardens stored with variety of beauteous and odoriferous flowers; or pleasant meadows, which are natural gardens! O, then, think every time thou seest or rememberest these, what a fragrant smell hath the precious ointment which is poured on the head of our glorious Saviour, and which must be poured on the heads of all his saints, which will fill all the room of heaven with its odour and perfume! How delightful is the music of the heavenly host! How pleasing will be those real beauties above, and how glorious the building not made with hands, and the house that God himself doth dwell in, and the walks and prospects of the city of God, and the beauties and delights in the celestial paradise! Think seriously what these must needs be. The like may be said of the delight of the sense of feeling, which, the philosopher saith, is the greatest of all the rest.

Sect. V. 3. Compare also the delights above with the delights that are found in natural knowledge. This is far beyond the delights of sense, and the delights of heaven are further beyond it.[d] Think, then, can an Archimedes be so taken up with his mathematical invention, that the threats of death cannot take him off, but he will die in the midst of these his natural contemplations? Should I not much more be taken up with the delights of glory, and die with these contemplations fresh upon my soul? especially when my death will perfect my delights; but those of Archimedes die with him.[e] What a pleasure is it to

[d] Cœlestia horum principia Deo nota sunt, atque ei qui Dei sit amicus, inquit Plato in Timæo. Docti ab indoctis perinde differunt, ut a viventibus mortui, ut sentit Aristoteles. Hoc interest inter doctum et indoctum, quod inter equum domitum et indomitum, ut Aristippus. Homini docto constat quando sit loquendum, quando tacendum, ut Jac. Grynæus in Aphorismis.

[e] Ferunt magnum Melancthonem dicere solitum, non credere se in universa Germania reperiri posse ullum, qui unicam integram paginam in Aristotelis organo recte intelligat. Cum hæc promissio complebitur, quid erimus? quales erimus? Quæ bona in illo regno accepturi sumus, qui Christo moriente pro nobis tale jam pignus accepimus? Qualis erit spiritus hominis nullum omnino habens vitium, nec sub quo jaceat, nec cui cedat, nec contra quod dimicet, pacatissima

dive into the secrets of nature; to find out the mysteries of arts and sciences; to have a clear understanding in logic, physic, metaphysics, music, astronomy, geometry, &c.! If we make but any new discovery in one of these, or see a little more than we saw before, what singular pleasure do we find therein! why, think then what high delights there are in the knowledge of God, and Christ, his Son. If the face of human learning be so beautiful, that sensual pleasures are to it but base and brutish, how beautiful then is the face of God! When we light on some choice and learned book, how are we taken with it; we could read and study it day and night; we can leave meat and drink and sleep to read it. What delights then are there at God's right-hand, where we shall know in a moment all that is to be known.

Sect. VI. 4. Compare also the delight above with the delights of morality, and of the natural affections. What delight had many sober heathens in the rules and practice of moral duties! so that they took him only for a honest man who did well through the love of virtue, not only for fear of punishment. Yea, so highly did they value this moral virtue, that they thought the chief happiness of man consisted in it. Why think, then, what excellency there will be in that rare perfection which we shall be raised to in heaven; and in that uncreated perfection of God which we shall behold? What sweetness is there in the exercise of natural love, whether to children, to parents, to yoke-fellows, or to friends? The delight which a pair of special, faithful friends do find in loving and enjoying one another, is a most pleasing, sweet delight. It seemed to the philosophers to be above the delights of natural or matrimonial friendship, and I think it seemed so to David himself; so he concludes his lamentation for him:[f] "I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan. Very pleasant hast thou been unto me; thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women." (2 Sam. i. 26.) Yea, the soul of Jonathan did cleave to David. Even Christ himself, as it seemeth, had some of this kind of love; for he had one disci-

virtute perfectus! Rerum ibi omnium quanta, quam speciosa quam certa scientia! Sine errore aliquo, vel labore, ubi Dei sapientia de ipso suo fonte potabitur cum summa felicitate, sine ulla difficultate?—*Aug. de Civitat.* lib. xxii. cap. 24. p. 11. De felicitate inter libros commorantis, lege Senecam suavissime disserentem, lib. de Brevit. Vitæ, cap. 14, 15.

[f] Ibi hymnidici angelorum chori; ibi societas civium supernorum; ibi dulcis solemnitas a peregrinationis hujus tristi labore redeuntium; ibi festivitas sine fine, æternitas sine labe, serenitas sine nube.—*August. in Johan.*

ple whom he especially loved, and who was wont to lean on his breast. Why think, then, if the delights of close and cordial friendship be so great, what delight we shall have in the friendship of the most high; and in our mutual amity with Jesus Christ; and in the dearest love and comfort with the saints! Surely this will be a closer and stricter friendship than ever was betwixt any friends on earth. And these will be more lovely, desirable friends than any that ever the sun beheld; and both our affections to our Father and our Saviour, but especially his affection to us, will be such as here we never knew; as spirits are so far more powerful than flesh, that one angel can destroy a host, so also are their affections more strong and powerful. We shall then love a thousand times more strongly and sweetly than now we can; and as all the attributes and works of God are incomprehensible, so is the attribute and work of love. He will love us many thousand times more than we even at the perfectest are able to love him. What joy, then, will there be in this mutual love!

Sect. VII. 5. Compare also the excellencies of heaven with those glorious works of the creation which our eyes do now behold. What a deal of wisdom, and power, and goodness, appeareth in and through them to a wise observer! What a deal of the majesty of the great Creator doth shine in the face of this fabric of the world! Surely, his works are great and admirable, sought out of them that have pleasure therein.[s] This makes the study of natural philosophy so pleasant, because the works of God are so excellent. What rare workmanship is in the body of a man, yea, in the body of every beast, which makes the anatomical studies so delightful! What excellency in every plant we see! in the beauty of flowers; in the nature, diversity, and use of herbs; in fruits, in roots, in minerals, and what not! But especially if we look to the greater works; if we consider the whole body of this earth, and its creatures, and inhabitants; the ocean of waters, with its motions and dimensions; the variation of the seasons, and of the face of the earth; the intercourse of spring and fall, of summer and winter; what wonderful excellency do these contain! Why think, then, in thy meditations, if these things, which are but servants to sinful man, are yet so full of mysterious worth; what, then, is that place where God

[s] Psalm xcii. 4, 5; cxi. 2; cxlv. 6—12; x. 7, 22; cxxxvi. 4—6, &c.; Job xxxvi. 24—26.

himself doth dwell, and is prepared for the just who are perfected with Christ! (When thou walkest forth in the evening, look upon the stars how they glisten, and in what number they bespangle the firmament.[h] If, in the daytime, look up to the glorious sun; view the wide-expanded, encompassing heavens, and say to thyself, What glory is in the least of yonder stars; what a vast, what a bright resplendent body hath yonder moon, and every planet! Oh, what an inconceivable glory hath the sun! Why, all this is nothing to the glory of heaven. Yonder sun must there be laid aside as useless, for it would not be seen, for the brightness of God. I shall live above all yonder glory; yonder is but darkness to the lustre of my Father's house. I shall be as glorious as that sun myself; yonder is but as the wall of the palace-yard; as the poet saith,

> "If in heaven's outward courts such beauty be,
> What is the glory which the saints do see!"

So think of the rest of the creatures. This whole earth is but my Father's footstool: this thunder is nothing to his dreadful voice: these winds are nothing to the breath of his mouth. So much wisdom and power as appeareth in all these; so much, and far much more greatness, and goodness, and loving delights, shall I enjoy in the actual fruition of God.) Surely, if the rain which rains, and the sun which shines on the just and unjust, be so wonderful; the sun, then, which must shine on none but saints and angels, must needs be wonderful and ravishing in glory.[i]

Sect. VIII. 6. Compare the things which thou shalt enjoy above, with the excellency of those admirable works of providence which God doth exercise in the church and in the world. What glorious things hath the Lord wrought! and yet we shall see more glorious than these. Would it not be an astonishing sight to see the sea stand as a wall on the right-hand and on the left, and the dry land appear in the midst, and the people of Israel pass safely through, and Pharaoh and his people swallowed

[h] In civitate Dei, rex veritas, lex charitas, dignitas æquitas, pax felicitas, vita æternitas.—*Aug. de Civ. Dei.*

[i] This month of April (in which Christ rose again, this resurrection-month) is the first month in the year; this rejoiceth all the creatures; this clotheth the naked trees; it openeth the earth; it gladdeneth every living thing. This is the first month of Christians, even the time of the resurrection, when their bodies shall be glorified by that light which now lies hid within them; that is, the Spirit, which then will be to them both clothing, meat, and drink, and joy, and peace, and ornament, and eternal life.—*Macarius*, homil. 5.

up? What, if we should see but such a sight now! If we had seen the ten plagues of Egypt, or had seen the rock to gush forth streams, or had seen manna or quails rained down from heaven, or had seen the earth open, and swallow up the wicked, or had seen their armies slain with hailstones, with an angel, or by one another; would not all these have been wondrous, glorious sights? But we shall see far greater things than these: and as our sights shall be more wonderful, so also they shall be more sweet: there shall be no blood nor wrath intermingled. We shall not then cry out as David, "Who can stand before this holy Lord God?" Would it not have been an astonishing sight to have seen the sun stand still in the firmament, or to have seen Ahaz's dial go ten degrees backward? Why, we shall see when there shall be no sun to shine at all: we shall behold for ever a sun of more incomparable brightness. Were it not a brave life, if we might still live among wonders and miracles; and all for us, and not against us: if we could have drought or rain at our prayers, as Elias; or if we could call down fire from heaven to destroy our enemies; or raise the dead to life, as Elisha; or cure the diseased, and speak strange languages, as the apostles? Alas! these are nothing to the wonders which we shall see and possess with God; and all those wonders of goodness and love. We shall possess that pearl and power itself, through whose virtue all these works were done: we shall, ourselves, be the subjects of more wonderful mercies than any of these. Jonas was raised but from a three days' burial, from the belly of the whale in the deep ocean; but we shall be raised from many years' rottenness and dust; and that dust exalted to a sun-like glory, and that glory perpetuated to all eternity. What sayest thou, Christian? Is not this the greatest of miracles or wonders? Surely, if we observe but common providences; the motions of the sun, the tides of the sea, the standing of the earth, the warming it, the watering it with rain as a garden, the keeping in order a wicked, confused world, with multitudes the like: they are all very admirable. But then to think of the Sion of God, of the vision of the divine majesty; of the comely order of the heavenly host: what an admirable sight must that needs be! O what rare and mighty works have we seen in Britain: what clear discoveries of an almighty arm; what magnifying of weakness; what casting down of strength; what wonders wrought by most improbable means; what bringing to hell, and bringing back; what turning of tears and fears into safety and joy; such hearing of

earnest prayers, as if God could have denied us nothing that we asked! All these were wonderful, heart-rising works. But, oh! what are these to our full deliverance; to our final conquest; to our eternal triumph; and to that great day of great things?

Sect. IX. 7. Compare also the mercies which thou shalt have above, with those particular providences which thou hast enjoyed thyself, and those observable mercies which thou hast recorded through thy life.[k] If thou be a Christian indeed, I know thou hast, if not in thy book, yet certainly in thy heart, a great many precious favours upon record: the very remembrance and rehearsal of them is sweet: how much more sweet was the actual enjoyment! But all these are nothing to the mercies which are above. Look over the excellent mercies of thy youth and education, the mercies of thy riper years or age, the mercies of thy prosperity, and of thy adversity: the mercies of thy several places and relations, are they not excellent and innumerable? Canst not thou think on the several places thou hast lived in, and remember that they have each had their several mercies: the mercies of such a place, and such a place; and all of them very rich and engaging mercies? O! how sweet was it to thee, when God resolved thy last doubts; when he overcame and silenced thy fears and unbelief; when he prevented the inconveniences of thy life, which thy own counsel would have cast thee into; when he eased thy pains; when he healed thy sickness, and raised thee up as from the very grave and death; when thou prayedst, and wept as Hezekiah, and saidst, "My days are cut off; I shall go to the gates of the grave; I am deprived of the residue of my years. I said, I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord in the land of the living: I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world. Mine age is departed and removed from me as a shepherd's tent: I have cut off, like a weaver, my life. He will cut me off with pining sickness: from day to day wilt thou make an end of me, &c. Yet did he, in love to thy soul, deliver it from the pit of corruption, and cast thy sins behind his back, and set thee among the living, to praise him as thou dost this day: that the fathers to the children might

[k] Temporalis vita æternæ comparata, mors est dicenda potius quam vita. Ipse enim quotidianus defectus corruptionis, quid est aliud quam prolixitas mortis? Quæ autem lingua dicere, vel quis intellectus capere sufficit illa supernæ civitatis quanta sint gaudia? Angelorum choris interesse, cum beatissimis spiritibus gloriæ conditoris assistere; præsentem Dei vultum cernere, incircumscriptum lumen videre, nullo mortis dolore affici, incorruptionis perpetuæ munere lætari?—*Gregor. in Homil.*

make known his truth. The Lord was ready to save thee, that thou mightest sing the songs of praise to him in his house all the days of thy life." (Isa. xxxviii. 10—20.) I say, were not all these most precious mercies? Alas! these are but small for thee in the eyes of God: he intended thee far greater things than these, even such as these are scarce a taste of. It was a choice mercy, that God hath so notably answered thy prayers; and that thou hast been so oft and evidently a prevailer with him. But, oh! think, then, are all these so sweet and precious, that my life would have been a perpetual misery without them? Hath his providence lifted me so high on earth, and his merciful kindness made me great? How sweet, then, will the glory of his presence be; and how high will his eternal love exalt me; and how great shall I be made in communion with his greatness! If my pilgrimage and warfare have such mercies, what shall I find in my home, and in my triumph! If God will communicate so much to me while I remain a sinner, what will he bestow when I am a perfect saint! If I have had so much in this strange country, at such a distance from him; what shall I have in heaven in his immediate presence, where I shall ever stand about his throne!

Sect. X. 8. Compare the comforts which thou shalt have above, with those which thou hast here received in the ordinances. Hath not the written word been to thee as an open fountain, flowing with comforts day and night? When thou hast been in trouble, there thou hast met with refreshing; when thy faith hath staggered, it hath there been confirmed. What suitable scriptures hath the Spirit set before thee! what seasonable promises have come into thy mind, so that thou mayest say with David, "If thy word had not been my delight, I had perished in my trouble." Think, then, if the word be so full of consolations, what overflowing springs shall we find in God! If his letters are so comfortable, what are the words that flow from his blessed lips, and the beams that stream from his glorious face! If Luther would not take all the world for one leaf of the Bible, what would he take for the joys which it revealeth! If the promise be so sweet, what is the performance! If the testament of our Lord, and our charter for the kingdom, be so comfortable, what will be our possession of the kingdom itself! Think further, what delights have I also found in this word preached, when I have sat under a heavenly, heart-searching teacher; how hath my heart been warmed within me; how

hath he melted me, and turned my bowels! methinks I have felt myself almost in heaven: methinks I could have been content to have sat and heard from morning to night; I could even have lived and died there. How oft have I gone to the congregation troubled in spirit, and returned home with quietness and delight! How oft have I gone doubting, concluding damnation against my own soul; and God hath sent me home with my doubts resolved, and satisfied me, and persuaded me of his love in Christ? How oft have I gone with darkness and doubtings in my judgment, and God hath opened to me such precious truths, and opened also my understanding to see them, that his light hath been exceeding comfortable to my soul! What cordials have I met with in my saddest afflictions! What preparatives to fortify me for the next encounter! Well then, if Moses's face do shine so gloriously, what glory is in the face of God! If the very feet of the messengers of these tidings of peace be beautiful, how beautiful is the face of the Prince of Peace![1] If the word in the mouth of a fellow-servant be so pleasant, what is the living Word himself! If this treasure be so precious in earthen vessels, what is that treasure laid up in heaven! Think with thyself, If I had heard but such a divine prophet as Isaiah, or such a persuading, moving prophet as Jeremy, or such a worker of miracles as Elijah or Elisha; how delightful a hearing would this have been! If I had heard but Peter, or John, or Paul, I should rejoice in it as long as I lived; but what would I give, that I had heard one sermon from the mouth of Christ himself? Surely, I should have felt the comfort of it in my very soul: why, but, alas! all this is nothing to what we shall have above.[m] O blessed are the eyes that see what there is seen, and

[1] Duræus cum diem recordaretur quo primo Melancthonem legentem audisset, illud recitare solebat, quod in suis initiationibus canunt pontificii. Quem vidi, quem amavi, quem dilexi.

[m] Patriam nostram paradisum computamus, parentes patriarchas habere jam cœpimus. Quid non properamus et currimus ut patriam nostram videre, ut parentes salutare possimus? Magnus illic nos charorum numerus expectat, parentum, fratrum, filiorum, frequens nos et copiosa turba desiderat, jam de sua immortalitate secura, et adhuc de nostra salute solicita. Ad horum conspectum et complexum venire, quanta et illis et nobis in commune lætitia est? Qualis illic cœlestium regnorum voluptas, sine timore moriendi, et cum æternitate vivendi? Quam summa et perpetua fœlicitas? Illic apostolorum gloriosus chorus; illic prophetarum exultantium numerus; illic martyrum innumerabilis populus, ob certaminis et passionis victoriam coronatus; triumphantes illic virgines, quæ concupiscentiam carnis et corporis continentiæ robore subegerunt. Remunerati misericordes qui alimentis et largitionibus pauperum justitiæ opera fecerunt, &c.—*Cyprian, de Immortalitate.*

the ears that hear the things that there are heard: there shall I hear Elias, Isaiah, Daniel, Peter, John, not preaching to an obstinate people in imprisonment, in persecutions, and reproach, but triumphing in the praises of him that hath advanced them. Austin was wont to wish these three wishes: First, That he might have seen Christ in the flesh: Secondly, That he might have heard Paul preach: Thirdly, That he might have seen Rome in its glory. Alas! these are small matters all, to that which Austin now beholds: there we see not Christ in the form of a servant, but Christ in his kingdom, in majesty and glory; not Paul preach in weakness and contempt, but Paul with millions more rejoicing and triumphing; not persecuting Rome in a fading glory, but Jerusalem which is above, in perfect and lasting glory.

So also think, what a joy it is to have access and acceptance in prayer; that when any thing aileth me, I may go to God, and open my case, and unbosom my soul to him, as to the most faithful friend; especially knowing his sufficiency and willingness to relieve me! Oh, but it will be a more surpassing, unspeakable joy, when I shall receive all blessings without asking them, and when all my necessities and miseries are removed, and when God himself will be the portion and inheritance of my soul.

What consolation also have we oft received in the supper of the Lord! What a privilege is it to be admitted to sit at his table; to have his covenant sealed to me by the outward ordinance, and his special love sealed by his Spirit to my heart! Why, but all the life and comfort of these, is their declaring and assuring me of the comforts hereafter: their use is but darkly to signify and seal those higher mercies: when I shall indeed drink with him the fruit of the vine renewed, it will then be a pleasant feast indeed. O the difference between the last supper of Christ on earth, and the marriage supper of the Lamb at the great day! Here he is in an upper room, accompanied with twelve poor selected men, feeding on no curious dainties, but a paschal lamb with sour herbs, and a Judas at his table ready to betray him: but then his room will be the glorious heavens, his attendants all the host of angels and saints: no Judas nor unfurnished guest comes there; but the humble believers must sit down by him, and the feast will be their mutual loving and rejoicing. Yet further, think with thyself thus: The communion of the saints on earth is a most delectable mercy;

what a pleasure is it to live with understanding and heavenly Christians! Even David saith, they were all his delight. (Psal. xvi.) O, then, what a delightful society shall I have above! The communion of saints is there somewhat worth, where their understandings are fully cleared, and their affections so highly advanced. If I had seen but Job in his sores upon the dung-hill, it would have been an excellent sight to see such a mirror of patience; what will it be then to see him in glory, praising that power which did uphold and deliver him! If I had heard but Paul and Silas singing in the stocks, it would have been a delightful hearing: what will it be then to hear them sing praises in heaven! If I had heard David sing praises on his lute and harp, it would have been a pleasing melody; and that which drove the evil spirit from Saul, would surely have driven away the dulness and sadness of my spirit, and have been to me as the music was to Elisha, that the Spirit of Christ in joy would have come upon me; why, I shall shortly hear that sweet singer in the heavenly choir advancing the King of saints; and will not that be a far more melodious hearing? If I had spoke with Paul when he was new come down from the third heavens, and he might have revealed to me the things which he had seen; O what would I give for an hour's such conference! how far would I go to hear such a narration! Why, I must shortly see those very things myself; yea, and far more than Paul was then capable of seeing; and yet I shall see no more than I shall possess. If I had but spoken one hour with Lazarus when he was risen from the dead, and heard him describe the things which he had seen in another world, if God would permit and enable him thereto, what a joyful discourse would that have been! How many thousand books may I read, before I could know so much as he could have told me in that hour! If God would have suffered him to tell what he had seen, the Jews would have more thronged to hear him, than they did to see him: O, but this would have been nothing to the sight itself, and to the fruition of all that which Lazarus saw.[n]

Once again, think with thyself what a soul-raising employment is the praising of God, especially in consort with his affectionate saints! What, if I had been in the place of those

[n] Erit ibi Deus omnia in omnibus, et illius præsentia omnes animæ et corporis implebit appetitus; cessabunt quæ de cætero consummatis omnibus, ministratorii angelicarum virtutum discursus. Et impleta ordinataque omnino civitate Dei; nec innovabitur, nec mutabitur ultra fixæ et consummatæ beatitudinis status.—*Cyprian. de Laude Martyr.*

shepherds, and seen the angels, and heard the multitude of the heavenly hosts praising God, and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men;" (Luke ii. 13, 14;) what a glorious sight and hearing would this have been! But I shall see and hear more glorious things than this. If I had stood by Christ when he was thanking his Father, (John xvii.,) I should have thought mine ears even blessed with his voice; how much more when I shall hear him pronounce me blessed! If there were such great joy at the bringing back of the ark, (2 Sam. vi. 15,) and such great joy at the re-edifying the material temple, (Neh. xii. 43,) what joy will there be in the New Jerusalem! Why, if I could but see the church here in unity and prosperity, what an unspeakable joy to my soul would it be! If I could see the congregations provided with able teachers, and the people receiving and obeying the Gospel, and longing for reformation in life and manners: O what a blessed place were England! If I could see our ignorance turned into knowledge, and error turned into soundness of understanding, and shallow professors into solid believers; and brethren living in amity and in the life of the Spirit; O what a fortunate island were this! Alas, alas! what is all this to the reformation in heaven, and to the blessed condition that we must live in there? There is another kind of change and glory than this; what great joy had the people, and David himself, to see them so willingly offer to the service of the Lord; and what an excellent psalm of praise doth David thereupon compose! (1 Chron. xxix. 9, 10, &c.) When Solomon was anointed king in Jerusalem, the people rejoiced with so great joy, that the earth rent at the sound of them; (1 Kings i. 40;) what a joyful shout will there be, then, at the appearing of the King to the church! If when the foundations of the earth were fastened, and the corner-stone thereof was laid, the morning-stars did sing together, and all the sons of God did shout for joy; (Job xxxviii. 6, 7;) why then, when our glorious world is both founded and finished, and the corner-stone appeareth to be the top-stone also, and the holy city is adorned as the bride of the Lamb; O sirs, what a joyful shout will then be heard!

Sect. XI. 9. Compare the joy which thou shalt have in heaven, with that which the saints of God have found in the way to it, and in the foretastes of it; when thou seest a heavenly man rejoice, think what it is that so affects him. It is

the property of fools to rejoice in toys, and to laugh at nothing; but the people of God are wiser than so, they know what it is that makes them glad: when did God ever reveal the least of himself to any of his saints, but the joy of their hearts was answerable to the revelation? Paul was so lifted up with what he saw, that he was in danger of being exalted above measure, and must have a prick in the flesh to keep him down: when Peter had seen but Christ in his transfiguration, which was but a small glimpse of his glory, and had seen Moses and Elias talking with him; what a rapture and ecstasy is he cast into! "Master," saith he, "it is good for us to be here; let us here build three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias:" as if he should say, O let us not go down again to yonder persecuting rabble; let us not go down again to yonder drossy, dirty world; let us not return to our mean and suffering state: is it not better that we stay here, now we are here; is not here better company, and sweeter pleasures? But the text saith, "He knew not what he said." (Matt. xvii. 4.) When Moses had been talking with God in the mount, it made his visage so shining and glorious, that the people could not endure to behold it, but he was fain to put a veil upon it: no wonder then if the face of God must be veiled, till we are come to that state where we shall be more capable of beholding him when the veil shall be taken away, and we all beholding him with open face, shall be turned into the same image from glory to glory. (2 Cor. iii. 16—18.) Alas! what are the back parts which Moses saw from the clefts of the rock, to that open face which we shall behold hereafter? what is that revelation to John in Patmos, to this revelation which we shall have in heaven? How short doth Paul's vision come of the saints' vision above with God. How small a part of the glory which we must see, was that which so transported Peter in the mount! I confess these were all extraordinary foretastes, but little to the full beatifical vision. When David foresaw the resurrection of Christ, and of himself, and the pleasures which he should have for ever at God's right-hand; how doth it make him break forth and say, "Therefore my heart was glad, and my glory rejoiceth, my flesh also shall rest in hope!" (Psal. xvi. 9.) Why, think, then, if the foresight can raise such ravishing joy, what will the actual possession do! How oft have we read and heard of the dying saints, who, when they had scarcely strength and life enough to express them, have been as full of joy as their hearts could

hold; and when their bodies have been under the extremities of their sickness, yea, ready to feel the pangs of death, have yet had so much of heaven in their spirits, that their joy hath far surpassed their sorrows. And if a spark of this fire be so glorious, and that in the midst of the sea of adversity; what then is that Sun of glory itself! O the joy that the martyrs of Christ have felt in the midst of the scorching flames! Surely they had life and sense as we, and were flesh and blood as well as we; therefore it must needs be some excellent thing that must so rejoice their souls, while their bodies were burning: when Bilney can burn his finger in the candle, and Cranmer can burn off his unworthy right-hand; when Bainham can call the papists to see a miracle, and tell them that he feels no more pain than in a bed of down, and that the fire was to him as a bed of roses; when Farrier can say, If I stir, believe not my doctrine:[o] think then, reader, with thyself in thy meditations; surely it must be some wonderful foretasted glory that can do all this, that can make the flames of fire easy, and that can make the king of fears so welcome. O what then must this glory itself needs be; when the very thoughts of it can bring Paul into such a strait, that he desired to depart and be with Christ, as best of all![p] when it can make men never think themselves well, till they are dead! O what a blessed rest is this! Shall Sanders so delightfully embrace the stake, and cry out, "Welcome cross!" and shall not I more delightfully embrace my blessedness, and cry, "Welcome crown!" Shall blessed Bradford kiss the faggot, and shall not I then kiss the Son himself. Shall the poor martyr rejoice that she might have her foot in the same hole of the stocks that Mr. Philpot's foot had been in before her; and shall not I rejoice, that my soul shall live in the same place of glory, where Christ and his apostles are gone before me? Shall fire and faggot, shall prisons and banishment, shall scorns and cruel torments, be more welcome to others, than Christ and glory shall be to me? God forbid. What thanks did Lucius the martyr give them, that they would send him to Christ from his ill masters on earth! how desirously did Basil wish, when his persecutors threatened his death the next day, that they might not change their resolution, lest he should miss of his expectation![q] What thanks then shall I give

[o] Sancti martyres presentem vitam non despexissent, nisi certiorem animarum vitam subsequi scirent.—*Greg. Dial.* lib. iv.

[p] Nihil crus sentit in nervo, quum animus est in cœlo.—*Tertul. ad Martyr.*

[q] Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. xiv. cap. 17. Id. lib. xi. cap. 9.

my Lord, for removing me from this loathsome prison to his glory! and how loth should I be to be deprived thereof! When Luther thought he should die of an apoplexy, it comforted him, and made him more willing, because the good Duke of Saxony, and, before him, the apostle John, had died of that disease: how much more should I be willing to pass the way that Christ hath passed, and come to the glory where Christ is gone! If Luther could thereupon say, "Feri, Domine, feri clementer; ipse paratus sum, quia verbo tuo à peccatis absolutus;" "Strike, Lord, strike gently, I am ready; because by thy word I am absolved from my sins;" how much more cheerfully should I cry, "Come, Lord, and advance me to this glory, and repose my weary soul in rest!"

Sect. XII. 10. Compare also the glory of the heavenly kingdom[r] with the glory of the imperfect church on earth, and with the glory of Christ in his state of humiliation, and you may easily conclude, if Christ under his Father's wrath, and Christ standing in the room of sinners, were so wonderful in excellencies, what then is Christ at the Father's right-hand? And if the church, under her sins and enemies, have so much beauty, something it will have at the marriage of the Lamb. How wonderful was the Son of God in the form of a servant! When he is born, the heavens must proclaim him by miracles; a new star must appear in the firmament, and fetch men from remote parts of the world to worship him in a manger; the angels and heavenly host must declare his nativity, and solemnize it with praising and glorifying God. When he is but a child, he must dispute with the doctors, and confute them. When he sets upon his office, his whole life is a wonder; water turned into wine; thousands fed with five loaves and two fishes; multitudes following him to see his miracles; the lepers cleansed; the sick healed; the lame restored; the blind receive their sight; the dead raised. If we had seen all this, should we not have thought it wonderful? The most desperate diseases cured with a touch, with a word speaking; the blind eyes with a little clay and spittle; the devils departing by legions at command; the

[r] Cum Christo semper vivemus, facti per ipsum filii Dei: cum ipso exultabimus semper, ipsius eruore reparati. Erimus Christiani cum Christo simul gloriosi, de Deo Patre beati, de perpetua voluptate lætantes; semper in conspectu Dei, et agentes Deo gratias semper. Neque enim poterit nisi et lætus esse semper et gratus, qui cum morti fuisset obnoxius, factus est de immortalitate securus.—*Cyprian. ad Demet.*

winds and the seas obeying his word; are not all these wonderful? Think, then, how wonderful is his celestial glory! If there be such cutting down of boughs, and spreading of garments, and crying, "Hosanna," to one that comes into Jerusalem riding on an ass, what will there be when he comes with his angels in his glory! If they that hear him preach the Gospel of the kingdom, have their hearts turned within them, that they return and say, "Never man spake like this man," then surely they that behold his majesty in his kingdom will say, 'There never was glory like this glory.' If when his enemies come to apprehend him, the word of his mouth doth cast them all to the ground; if, when he is dying, the earth must tremble, the vail of the temple rend, the sun in the firmament must hide its face, and deny its light to the sinful world, and the dead bodies of the saints arise, and the standers-by be forced to acknowledge, "Verily this was the Son of God;" O then, what a day will it be when he will once more shake, not the earth only, but the heavens also, and remove the things that are shaken; when this sun shall be taken out of the firmament, and be everlastingly darkened with the brightness of his glory; when the dead must all arise, and stand before him, and all shall acknowledge him to be the Son of God, and every tongue confess him to be Lord and King! If, when he riseth again, the grave and death have lost their power, and the angels of heaven must roll away the stone, and astonish the watchmen till they are as dead men, and send the tidings to his dejected disciples; if the bolted doors cannot keep him forth; if the sea be as firm ground for him to walk on; if he can ascend to heaven in the sight of his disciples, and send the angels to forbid them gazing after him; O what power, and dominion, and glory, then, is he now possessed of; and must we for ever possess with him! Yet think further: Are his very servants enabled to do such miracles, when he is gone from them? Can a few poor fishermen, and tent-makers, and the like mechanics, cure the lame, and blind, and sick; open their prisons; destroy the disobedient; raise the dead; and astonish their adversaries? O then, what a world will that be, where every one can do greater works than these, and shall be highlier honoured than by the doing of wonders! It were much to have the devils subject to us, but more to have our names written in the book of life. If the very preaching of the Gospel be accompanied with such power, that it will pierce the heart, and discover its secrets,

bring down the proud, and make the stony sinner tremble; if it can make men burn their books, sell their lands, bring in the price and lay it down at the preacher's feet; if it can make the spirits of princes stoop, and the kings of the earth resign their crowns, and do their homage to Jesus Christ; if it can subdue kingdoms, and convert thousands, and turn the world thus upside down; if the very mention of the judgment, and life to come, can make the judge on the bench to tremble, when the prisoner at the bar doth preach this doctrine; O what then is the glory of the kingdom itself! What an absolute dominion have Christ and his saints! And if they have this power and honour in the day of their abasement, and in the time appointed for their suffering and disgrace, what then will they have in their full advancement!

Sect. XIII. 11. Compare the mercies thou shalt have above with the mercies which Christ hath here bestowed on thy soul, and the glorious change which thou shalt have at last with the gracious change which the Spirit hath wrought on thy heart; compare the comforts of thy glorification, with the comforts of thy sanctification. There is not the smallest grace in thee which is genuine and sincere, but is of greater worth than the riches of the Indies; not a hearty desire, and groan after Christ, but is more to be valued than the kingdoms of the world. A renewed nature is the very image of God. Scripture calleth it by the name of "Christ dwelling in us," and, "the Spirit of God abiding in us."[a] It is a beam from the face of God himself; it is the seed of God remaining in us; it is the only inherent beauty of the rational soul; it ennobleth man above all nobility; it fitteth him to understand his Maker's pleasure, to do his will, and to receive his glory: why think, then, with thyself, if this grain of mustard-seed be so precious, what is the tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God! If a spark of life, which will but strive against corruptions, and flame out a few desires and groans, be so much worth, how glorious, then, is the fountain and end of this life! If we be said to be like God, and to bear his image, and to be holy as he is holy, when, alas! we are pressed down with a body of sin; surely we shall be much liker God, when we are perfectly holy, and without

[a] Hear a heathen: Inter bonos viros et Deum amicitia est, conciliante virtute. Amicitiam dico? Immo etiam necessitudo, et similitudo; quoniam bonus ipse tempore tantum a Deo differt, discipulus ejus, æmulatorque et vera progenies, quem parens ille magnificus, virtutum non lenis exactor, sicut severi patres, durius educat.—*Seneca, Cum bonis mala*, cap. 1. p. 379.

blemish, and have no such thing as sin within us! Is the desire of heaven so precious a thing, what then is the thing itself which is desired? Is the love so excellent, what then is the Beloved? Is our joy in foreseeing and believing so sweet, what will be the joy in the full possessing? O the delight that a Christian hath in the lively exercise of some of these affections! What good doth it to his very heart, when he can feelingly say he loves his Lord! What sweetness is there in the very act of loving! Yea, even those troubling passions of sorrow and fear, are yet delightful, when they are rightly exercised. How glad is a poor Christian when he feeleth his heart begin to melt, and when the thoughts of sinful unkindness will dissolve it! Even this sorrow doth yield him matter of joy. O what will it then be, when we shall do nothing but know God, and love, and rejoice, and praise, and all this in the highest perfection! What a comfort is it to my doubting soul, when I have a little assurance of the sincerity of my graces; when, upon examination, I can but trace the Spirit in his sanctifying works! How much more will it comfort me to find that the Spirit hath safely conducted me, and left me in the arms of Jesus Christ! What a change was it that the Spirit made upon my soul, when he first turned me from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God; to be taken from that horrid state of nature, wherein myself and my actions were loathsome to God, and the sentence of death was passed upon me, and the Almighty took me for his utter enemy; and to be presently numbered among his saints, and called his friend, his servant, his son; and the sentence revoked which was gone forth; O what a change was this! To be taken from that state wherein I was born, and had lived delightfully so many years, and was riveted in it by custom and engagements, when thousands of sins did lie upon my score, and if I had so died I had been damned for ever; and to be justified from all these enormous crimes, and freed from all these fearful plagues, and put into the title of an heir of heaven, O what an astonishing change was this! Why, then, consider, how much greater will that glorious change then be; beyond expressing; beyond conceiving! How oft, when I have thought of this change in my regeneration, have I cried out, 'O blessed day, and blessed be the Lord that I ever saw it!' Why, how then should I cry out in heaven, 'O blessed eternity, and blessed be the Lord that brought me to it!' Was the mercy of my conversion

so great, that the angels of God did rejoice to see it? Sure, then, the mercy of my salvation will be so great, that the same angels will congratulate my felicity. This grace is but a spark that is raked up in the ashes. It is covered with flesh from the sight of the world, and covered with corruption sometimes from mine own sight; but my everlasting glory will not be so clouded, nor my light be under a bushel, but upon a hill, even upon Sion, the mount of God.

Sect. XIV. 12. Lastly, Compare the joys which thou shalt have above, with those foretastes of it, which the Spirit hath given thee here.[t] Judge of the lion by the paw, and of the ocean of joy by that drop which thou hast tasted. Thou hast here thy strongest refreshing comforts, but as that man in hell would have had the water to cool him, a little upon the tip of the finger for thy tongue to taste, yet by this little thou mayest conjecture at the quality of the whole. Hath not God sometimes revealed himself extraordinarily to thy soul, and let a drop of glory fall upon it? Hast thou not been ready to say, 'Oh, that it might be thus with my soul continually, and that I might always feel what I feel sometimes! Dist thou never cry out with the martyr after thy long and doleful expectations, 'He is come; he is come?' Didst thou never, in a lively sermon of heaven, nor in thy retired contemplations on that blessed state, perceive thy drooping spirits revive, and thy dejected heart to lift up the head: and the light of heaven to break forth to thy soul, as a morning star, or as the dawning of the day? Didst thou never perceive thy heart in these duties, to be as the child that Elisha revived? to wax warm within thee, and to recover life? Why, think with thyself, then, what is the earnest to this full inheritance? Alas! all this light that so amazeth and rejoiceth me, is but a candle lighted from heaven, to lead me thither through this world of darkness! If the light of a star in the night be such, or the little glimmering at the break of the day, what then is the light of the sun at noontide? If some godly men that we

[t] Ibi non gustabunt quam suavis sit Deus, sed implebuntur et satiabuntur dulcedine mirifica. Nihil eis deerit; nihil aberit: omne desiderium eorum Christus præsens implebit. Non senescent, non tabescent, non putrescent amplius. Perpetua sanitas, fœlix æternitas, beatitudinis illius sufficientiam confirmabunt. Non erit concupiscentia in membris, non ultra ulla exsurget rebellio carnis: sed totus status hominis pacificus, sine omni macula et ruga permanebit.—*Cyprian. de Laude Martyr.* Quæcunque supra cœlum sunt mentes et formæ, Olympici illius habitaculi cives, si non eadem atque Deus, illi tamen dignitate et natura proximum conditionem acceperunt.—*Fernel. de Abdit. Rerum Causis*, cap. 9. ex Platone.

read of, have been overwhelmed with joy, till they have cried out, 'Hold, Lord, stay thy hand; I can bear no more!' like weak eyes that cannot endure too great a light; O what will then be my joys in heaven, when, as the object of my joy shall be the most glorious God, so my soul shall be made capable of seeing and enjoying him. And though the light be ten thousand times greater than the sun's, yet my eyes shall be able for ever to behold it.

Or, if thou be one that hast not felt yet these sweet foretastes, (for every believer hath not felt them), then make use of the former delights which thou hast felt, that thou mayest the better discern what hereafter thou shalt feel.

And thus I have done with the fifth part of this directory, and showed you on what grounds to advance your meditations, and how to get them to quicken your affections, by comparing the unseen delights of heaven with those smaller which you have seen and felt in the flesh.

CHAP. XII.

How to manage and watch over the Heart through the whole Work.

SECT. 1. Sixthly: The sixth and last part of this directory is, to guide you in the managing of your hearts through this work, and to show you wherein you have need to be exceeding watchful. I have showed before what must be done with your hearts in your preparations to the work, and in your setting upon it; I shall now show it you in respect of the time of performance. Our chief work will here be, to discover to you the danger, and that will direct you to the fittest remedy. Let me therefore here acquaint you beforehand, that whenever you set upon this heavenly employment, you shall find your own hearts your greatest hinderer, and they will prove false to you in one or all of these four degrees. First, They will hold off, that you will hardly get them to the work. Secondly, Or else they will betray you by their idleness in the work, pretending to do it, when they do it not. Or, Thirdly, They will interrupt the work by their frequent excursions, and turning aside to every object. Or, Fourthly, They will spoil the work by cutting it short, and be gone before you have done any good on it. Therefore I here forewarn you,

as you value the invaluable comfort of this work, that you faithfully resist these four dangerous evils, or else all that I have said hitherto is in vain.

1. Thou shalt find thy heart as backward to this, I think, as to any work in the world. O what excuses it will make; what evasions it will find out; and what delays and demurs, when it is never so much convinced! Either it will question whether it be a duty or not; or if it be so to others, yet whether it be so to thee. It will take up any thing like reason to plead against it; it will tell thee that this is a work for ministers that have nothing else to study on; or for cloisterers or persons that have more leisure than thou hast. If thou be a minister, it will tell thee, This is the duty of the people; it is enough for thee to meditate for the instructing of them, and let them meditate on what they have heard; as if it were thy duty only to cook their meat, and serve it up, and perhaps a little to taste the sweetness, by licking thy fingers while thou art dressing it for others; but it is they only that must eat it, digest it, and live upon it. Indeed, the smell may a little refresh thee, but it must be digesting it that must maintain thy strength and life. If all this will not serve, thy heart will tell thee of other business; thou hast this company stays for thee, or that business must be done. It may be, it will set thee upon some other duty, and so make one duty shut out another; for it had rather go to any duty than to this. Perhaps it will tell thee that other duties are greater, and therefore this must give place to them, because thou hast not time for both. Public business is of more concernment; to study, to preach for the saving of souls, must be preferred before these private contemplations: as if thou hadst no time to see to the saving of thine own soul, for looking after others; or thy charity to others were so great, that it draws thee to neglect thy comfort and salvation; or, as if there were any better way to fit us to be useful to others, than to make this experience of our doctrine ourselves! Certainly heaven, where is the Father of lights, is the best fire to light our candle at, and the best book for a preacher to study; and, if they would be persuaded to study that more, the church would be provided of more heavenly lights; and when their studies are divine, and their spirits divine, their preaching will then be also divine, and they may be fitly called divines indeed: or if thy heart have nothing to say against the work, then it will trifle away the time in delays, and promise this day and the next, but still keep off from the doing.

of the business: or lastly, If thou wilt not be so baffled with excuses or delays, thy heart will give thee a flat denial, and oppose its own unwillingness to thy reason; thou shalt find it come to the work as a bear to the stake, and draw back with all the strength it hath. I speak all this of the heart so far as it is carnal, (which in too great a measure is in the best) for I know so far as the heart is spiritual, it will judge this work the sweetest in the world.

Well, then, what is to be done in the forementioned case? Wilt thou do it, if I tell thee? Why, what wouldst thou do with a servant that were thus backward to his work: or to thy beast that should draw back when thou wouldst have him go forward? Wouldst thou not first persuade, and then chide, and then spur him, and force him on; and take no denial, nor let him alone till thou hadst got him closely to fall to his work? Wouldst thou not say, 'Why, what should I do with a servant that will not work; or with an ox or horse that will not travel or labour? Shall I keep them to look on?' Wilt thou then faithfully deal thus with thy heart? If thou be not a lazy, self-deluding hypocrite, say, 'I will, by the help of God, I will.' Set upon thy heart roundly, persuade it to the work, take no denial; chide it for its backwardness; use violence with it; bring it to the service, willing or not willing. Art thou the master of thy flesh, or art thou a servant to it? Hast thou no command of thy own thoughts? Cannot thy will choose the subject of thy meditations, especially when thy judgment thus directeth thy will? I am sure God once gave thee mastery over thy flesh, and some power to govern thy own thoughts; hast thou lost thy authority? art thou become a slave to thy depraved nature? Take up the authority again which God hath given thee; command thy heart; if it rebel, use violence with it; if thou be too weak, call in the Spirit of Christ to thine assistance. He is never backward to so good a work, nor will deny his help to so just a cause. God will be ready to help thee, if thou be not unwilling to help thyself. Say to him, 'Why, Lord, thou gavest my reason the command of my thoughts and affections; the authority I have received over them is from thee, and now, behold they refuse to obey thine authority. Thou commandest me to set them to the work of heavenly meditation, but they rebel and stubbornly refuse the duty. Wilt thou not assist me to execute that authority which thou hast given me? Oh, send me down thy Spirit and power, that I may enforce thy commands, and effectually compel them to obey thy will.'

And thus doing, thou shalt see thy heart will submit; its resistance will be brought under, and its backwardness will be turned to a yielding compliance.

Sect. II. 2. When thou hast got thy heart to the work, beware lest it delude thee by a loitering formality; lest it say, 'I go,' and go not; lest it trifle out the time, while it should be effectually employed meditating. Certainly, the heart is as likely to betray thee in this, as in any one particular about the duty; when thou hast perhaps but an hour's time for thy meditation, the time will be spent before thy heart will be serious. This doing of duty as if we did it not, doth undo as many as the flat omission of it. To rub out the hour in a bare, lazy thinking of heaven, is but to lose that hour, and delude thyself. Well, what is to be done in this case? Why, do here also as you do by a loitering servant; keep thine eye always upon thy heart; look not so much to the time it spendeth in the duty, as to the quantity and quality of the work that is done. You can tell by his work whether your servant hath been painful; ask, 'What affections have yet been acted; how much am I yet got nearer heaven?' Verily, many a man's heart must be followed as close in this duty of meditation, as a horse in a mill, or an ox at the plough, that will go no longer than you are calling or scourging. If you cease driving but a moment, the heart will stand still; and perhaps the best hearts have much of this temper.

I would not have thee of the judgment of those, who think that while they are so backward, it is better let it alone: and that if mere love will not bring them to the duty, but there must be all this violence used to compel it, that then the service is worse than the omission. These men understand not, First, That this argument would certainly cashier all spiritual obedience, because the hearts of the best being but partly sanctified, will still be resisting so far as they are carnal: Secondly, Nor do they understand well the corruptness of their own natures: Thirdly, Nor, that their sinful undisposedness will not baffle or suspend the commands of God: Fourthly, Nor one sin excuse another: Fifthly, Especially they little know the way of God to excite their affections; and that the love which should compel them, must itself be first compelled, in the same sense as it is said to compel. Love, I know, is a most precious grace, and should have the chief interest in all our duties: but there are means appointed by God to procure this love; and shall I not use those means, till I can use them from love? That were

to neglect the means, till I have the end. Must I not seek to procure love, till I have it already? There are means also for the increasing of love where it is begun; and means for the exciting of it where it lieth dull; and must I not use these means, till it is increased and excited? Why this reasoning-considering-duty that we are in hand with, is the most singular means, both to stir up thy love, and to increase it; and therefore stay not from the duty till thou feel thy love constrain thee, that were to stay from the fire till thou feel thyself warm; but fall upon the work till thou art constrained to love, and then love will constrain thee to further duty.

My jealousy, lest thou shouldst miscarry by these sottish opinions, hath made me more tedious in the opening of their error. Let nothing therefore hinder thee while thou art upon the work, from plying thy heart with constant watchfulness and constraint, seeing thou hast such experience of its dulness and backwardness: let the spur be never out of its side; and whenever it slacks its pace, be sure to give it a remembrance.

Sect. III. 3. As thy heart will be loitering, so will it be diverting. It will be turning aside like a careless servant, to talk with every one that passeth by. When there should be nothing in thy mind but the work in hand, it will be thinking of thy calling, or thinking of thy afflictions, or of every bird, or tree, or place, thou seest, or of any impertinency, rather than of heaven. Thy heart in this also will be like the husbandman's ox or horse: if he drive not, he will not go; and if he guide not, he will not keep the furrow; and it is as good stand still as to go out of the way. Experience will tell thee thou wilt have much ado with thy heart in this point, to keep it one hour to the work, without many extravagances and idle cogitations. The cure here is the same with that before, to use watchfulness and violence with your own imaginations, and as soon as they step out to chide them in. Say to thine heart, 'What! did I come hither to think of my business in the world; to think of places, and persons, of news, or vanity, yea, or of any thing but heaven, be it never so good?' What! canst thou not watch one hour? Wouldst thou leave this world, and dwell in heaven with Christ for ever? And canst thou not leave it one hour out of thy thoughts, nor dwell with Christ in one hour's close meditation? Ask thy heart, as Absalom did Hushai, 'Is this thy love to thy friend? Dost thou love Christ, and the place of thy eternal, blessed abode, no more than so?' When

Pharaoh's butler dreamed that he pressed the ripe grapes into Pharaoh's cup, and delivered the cup into the king's hand, it was a happy dream, and signified his speedy access to the king's presence: but the dream of the baker, that the birds did eat out of the basket on his head, the baked meats prepared for Pharaoh, had an ill omen, and signified his hanging, and their eating of his flesh. (Gen. xl. 10, 11, &c.) So when the ripened grapes of heavenly meditation are pressed by thee into the cup of affection, and this put into the hands of Christ by delightful praises, if thou take me for skilful, this is the interpretation, that thou shalt shortly be taken from this prison where thou liest, and be set before Christ in the court of heaven, and there serve up to him that cup of praise, but much fuller and much sweeter, for ever and ever. But if the ravenous fowls of wandering thoughts do devour the meditations intended for heaven, I will not say flatly, it signifies thy death; but this I will say, that so far as these intrude, they will be the death of that service; and if thou ordinarily admit them, that they devour the life and the joy of thy thoughts; and if thou continue in such a way of duty to the end, it signifies the death of thy soul, as well as of thy service. Drive away these birds of prey, then, from thy sacrifice, and strictly keep thy heart to the work thou art upon.

Sect. IV. 4. Lastly, Be sure also to look to thy heart in this, that it cut not off the work before the time, and run not away through weariness, before it have leave. Thou shalt find it will be exceeding prone to this, like the ox that would unyoke, or the horse that would be unburdened, and perhaps cast off his burden, and run away. Thou mayest easily perceive this in other duties; if in secret thou set thyself to pray, is not thy heart urging thee still to cut it short; dost thou not frequently find a motion to have done; art thou not ready to be up as soon almost as thou art down on thy knees? Why, so it will be also in thy contemplations of heaven: as fast as thou gettest up thy heart, it will be down again; it will be weary of the work; it will be minding thee of other business to be done, and stop thy heavenly walk, before thou art well warm. Well, what is to be done in this case also? Why, the same authority and resolution which brought it to the work, and observed it in the work, must also hold it to it, till the work be done. Charge it in the name of God to stay: do not so great a work by the halves: say to it, Why, foolish heart! if thou beg a while, and go away before thou hast thy alms, dost thou not lose thy labour?

if thou stop before thou art at the end of thy journey, is not every step of thy travel lost? Thou camest hither to fetch a walk to heaven, in hope to have a sight of the glory which thou must inherit; and wilt thou stop when thou art almost at the top of the hill; and turn away before thou hast taken thy survey? Thou camest hither in hope to speak with God, and wilt thou go before thou hast seen him? Thou camest to bathe thyself in the streams of consolation, and to that end didst unclothe thyself of thy earthly thoughts: and wilt thou put a foot in, and so be gone? Thou camest to spy out the land of promise; O go not back with the bunch of grapes, which thou mayest show to thy brethren, when thou comest home, for their confirmation and encouragement, till thou canst tell them by experience, that it is a land flowing with wine and oil, with milk and honey. Let them see that thou hast tasted of the wine, by the gladness of thy heart; and that thou hast been anointed with the oil, by the cheerfulness of thy countenance: (Psal. civ. 15:) let them see that thou hast tasted of the milk of the land, by thy feeding, and by thy mild and gentle disposition: and of the honey, by the sweetness of thy words and conversation. The views of heaven would heal thee of thy sinfulness, and of thy sadness; but thou must hold on the plaster, that it may have time to work: this heavenly fire would melt thy frozen heart, and refine it from the dross, and take away the earthly part, and leave the rest more spiritual and pure; but then thou must not be presently gone, before it have time either to burn or warm. Stick, therefore, to the work, till something be done; till thy graces be acted, thy affections raised, and thy soul refreshed with the delights above; or if thou canst not obtain these ends at once, ply it the closer the next time, and let it not go till thou feel the blessing. "Blessed is that servant whom his Lord when he comes shall find so doing." (Matt. xxiv. 46.)

CHAP. XIII.

The Abstract, or Sum of all, for the Use of the Weak.

SECT. I. Thus I have, by the gracious assistance of the Spirit, directed you in this work of heavenly contemplation, and lined you out the best way that I know for your successful perform-

ance; and led you into the path where you may walk with God. But because I would bring it down to the capacity of the meanest, and help their memories who are apt to let slip the former particulars, and cannot well lay together the several branches of this method, that they may reduce them to practice, I shall here contract the whole into a brief sum, and lay it all before you in a narrower compass. But still, reader, I wish thee to remember, that it is the practice of a duty that I am directing thee in, and therefore, if thou wilt not practise it, do not read it.

The sum is this,—As thou makest conscience of praying daily, so do thou of the acting of thy graces in meditation; and more especially in meditating on the joys of heaven. To this end, set apart one hour or half an hour every day, wherein thou mayest lay aside all worldly thoughts, and with all possible seriousness and reverence, as if thou wert going to speak with God himself, or to have a sight of Christ, or of that blessed place; so do thou withdraw thyself into some secret place, and set thyself wholly to the following work; if thou canst, take Isaac's time and place, who went forth into the field in the evening to meditate: but if thou be a servant, or poor man, that cannot have that leisure, take the fittest time and place that thou canst, though it be when thou art private about thy labours.

When thou settest to the work, look up toward heaven; let thine eye lead thee as near as it can: remember that there is thine everlasting rest: study its excellency, study its reality, till thy unbelief be silenced, and thy faith prevail. If thy judgment be not yet drawn to admiration, use those sensible helps and advantages which were even now laid down. Compare thy heavenly joys with the choicest on earth, and so rise up from sense to faith; if yet this mere consideration prevail not (which yet hath much force, as is before expressed), then fall a-pleading the case with thy heart: preach upon this text of heaven to thyself; convince, inform, confute, instruct, reprove, examine, admonish, encourage, and comfort, thy own soul from this celestial doctrine: draw forth those several considerations of thy rest, on which thy several affections may work, especially that affection or grace which thou intendest to act. If it be love which thou wouldst act, show it the loveliness of heaven, and how suitable it is to thy condition: if it be desire, consider of thy absence from this lovely object: if it be hope, consider the possibility and probability of obtaining it: if it be courage,

consider the singular assistance and encouragements which thou mayest receive from God, the weakness of the enemy, and the necessity of prevailing: if it be joy, consider of its excellent ravishing glory, of the interest in it, and of its certainty, and the nearness of the time when thou mayest possess it. Urge these considerations home to thy heart; whet them with all possible seriousness upon each affection. If thy heart draw back, force it to the work: if it loiter, spur it on; if it step aside, command it in again: if it would slip away, and leave the work, use thine authority; keep it close to the business, till thou have obtained thine end: stir not away, if it may be, till thy love do flame, till thy joy be raised, or till thy desire or other graces be livelily acted. Call in assistance also from God; mix ejaculations with thy cogitations and soliloquies; till having seriously pleaded the case with thy heart, and reverently pleaded the case with God, thou hast pleaded thyself from a clod to a flame; from a forgetful sinner to a mindful lover; from a lover of the world, to a thirster after God; from a fearful coward, to a resolved Christian; from an unfruitful sadness, to a joyful life. In a word, what will not be done one day, do it the next, till thou have pleaded thy heart from earth to heaven; from conversing below, to a walking with God; and till thou canst lay thy heart to rest, as in the bosom of Christ, in this meditation of thy full and everlasting rest.

And this is the sum of these precedent directions.

CHAP. XIV.

An Example of this Heavenly Contemplation, for the Help of the Unskilful.

There remaineth a Rest for the People of God.

SECT. I. Rest; how sweet a word is this to mine ears! Methinks the sound doth turn to substance, and having entered at the ear, doth possess my brain; and thence descendeth down to my very heart: methinks I feel it stir and work, and that through all my parts and powers, but with a various work upon my various parts. To my wearied senses and languid spirits it seems a quieting, powerful opiate; to my dulled powers it is spirit and life; to my dark eyes it is both eye-salve and a prospective; to my taste it is sweetness; to mine ears it is melody; to my hands

and feet it is strength and nimbleness. Methinks I feel it digest as it proceeds, and increase my native heat and moisture; and, lying as a reviving cordial at my heart, from thence doth send forth lively spirits, which beat through all the pulses of my soul. Rest,—not as the stone that rests on the earth, nor as these clods of flesh shall rest in the grave; so our beasts must rest as well as we: nor is it the satisfying of our fleshly lusts, nor such rest as the carnal world desireth: no, no; we have another kind of rest than these: rest we shall from all our labours, which were but the way and means to rest, but yet that is the smallest part. O blessed rest, where we shall never rest day or night, crying "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of sabbaths:" when we shall rest from sin, but not from worship; from suffering and sorrow, but not from solace! O blessed day, when I shall rest with God;[u] when I shall rest in the arms and bosom of my Lord; when I shall rest in knowing, loving, rejoicing, and praising; when my perfect soul and body together, shall in these perfect things perfectly enjoy the most perfect God; when God also, who is love itself, shall perfectly love me; yea, and rest in his love to me, as I shall rest in my love to him, and rejoice over me with joy and singing, (Zeph. iii. 17,) as I shall rejoice in him! How near is that most blessed, joyful day! It comes apace; even that comes will come, and will not tarry. Though my Lord do seem to delay his coming, yet a little while and he will be here. What is a few hundred years when they are over! How surely will his sign appear, and how suddenly will he seize upon the careless world! Even as the lightning that shines from east to west in a moment, he who has gone hence will even so return. Methinks I even hear the voice of his foregoers; methinks I see him coming in the clouds, with the attendance of his angels, in majesty and in glory. O poor, secure sinners, what will you now do? Where will you hide yourselves, or what shall cover you? Mountains are gone; the earth and heavens that were, are passed away; the devouring fire hath consumed all except yourselves, who must be the fuel for ever. Oh, that you could consume as soon as the earth, and melt away as did the heavens! Ah, these wishes are now but vain; the Lamb himself would have been your friend; he would have loved you and ruled

[u] Præmium est videre Deum, vivere cum Deo, vivere de Deo, esse cum Deo, esse in Deo, qui erit omnia in omnibus, habere Deum qui est summum bonum; et ubi est summum bonum, ubi est summa felicitas, summa jucunditas, vera libertas, perfecta charitas, et æterna securitas.—*Bernard. de Præmio Cœlest.*

you, and now have saved you; but you would not then, and now is too late. Never cry, 'Lord, Lord:' too late, too late, man; why dost thou look about? Can any save thee? Whither dost thou run? Can any hide thee? O wretch, that hast brought thyself to this! Now blessed saints that have believed and obeyed, this is the end of faith and patience; this is it for which you prayed and waited; do you now repent your sufferings and sorrows; your self-denying, and holy walking? Are your tears of repentance now bitter or sweet? Oh, see how the Judge doth smile upon you; there is love in his looks; the titles of Redeemer, Husband, Head, are written in his amiable, shining face. Hark, doth he not call you? He bids you stand here on his right-hand; fear not, for there he sets his sheep. O joyful sentence pronounced by that blessed mouth: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundations of the world." See how your Saviour takes you by the hand; go along you must, the door is open, the kingdom is his, and therefore yours. There is your place before his throne; the Father receiveth you as the spouse of his Son; he bids you welcome to the crown of glory: never so unworthy, crowned you must be. This was the project of free redeeming grace, and this was the purpose of eternal love. O blessed grace! O blessed love! Oh, the frame that my soul will then be in! Oh, how love and joy will stir! But I cannot express it; I cannot conceive it.

This is that joy which was procured by sorrow: this is that crown which was procured by the cross. My Lord did weep, that now my tears might be wiped away; he did bleed, that I might now rejoice; he was forsaken, that I might not now be forsaken; he did then die, that I might now live. This weeping, wounded Lord shall I behold; this bleeding Saviour shall I see, and live in him that died for me. Oh, free mercy, that can exalt so vile a wretch! Free to me, though dear to Christ; free grace that hath chosen me, when thousands were forsaken; when my companions in sin must burn in hell, and I must here rejoice in rest. Here must I live with all these saints: O comfortable meeting of my old acquaintance, with whom I prayed, and wept, and suffered; with whom I spake of this day and place. I see the grave could not contain you; the sea and earth must give up their dead; the same love hath redeemed and saved you also. This is not like our cottages of clay, nor like our prisons, or earthly dwellings; this voice of joy is not

like our old complainings, our groans, our sighs, our impatient moans; nor this melodious praise like our scorns and revilings, nor like the oaths and curses which we heard on earth; this body is not like the body we had, nor this soul like the soul we had, nor this life like the life that then we lived. We have changed our place, we have changed our state, our clothes, our thoughts, our looks, our language; we have changed our company for the greater part, and the rest of our company is changed itself. Before, a saint was weak and despised, so full of pride, and peevishness, and other sins, that we could scarcely ofttimes discern their graces; but now how glorious a thing is a saint! Where is now their body of sin which wearied themselves and those about them? Where are now our different judgments, our reproachful titles, our divided spirits, our exasperated passions, our strange looks, our uncharitable censures? Now we are all of one judgment, of one name, of one heart, of one house, and of one glory. O sweet reconcilement! O happy union! which makes us first to be one with Christ, and then to be one among ourselves. Now, our differences shall be dashed in our teeth no more, nor the Gospel reproached through our folly or scandal. O my soul, thou shalt never more lament the sufferings of the saints, never more condole the church's ruins, never bewail thy suffering friends, nor lie wailing over their deathbeds, or their graves; thou shalt never suffer thy old temptations from Satan, the world, or thy flesh; thy body will no more be such a burden to thee; thy pains and sicknesses are all now cured; thou shalt be troubled with weakness and weariness no more; thy head is not now an aching head, nor thy heart now an aching heart;* thy hunger, and thirst, and cold, and sleep, thy labour and study, are all gone. O what a mighty change is this! from the dunghill to the throne; from persecuting sinners to praising saints; from a body as vile as the carrion in the ditch, to a body as bright as the sun in the firmament; from complainings under the displeasure of God, to the perfect enjoyment of him in love; from all my doubts and fears of my condition to this possession which hath put me out of doubt; from all my fearful thoughts of death to this most blessed, joyful life! O what a blessed change is this! Farewell, sin and suffering,

* Qualis erit corpus, quod omnimodo spiritui subditum, et eo sufficienter vivificatum nullis alimoniis indigebit? Non enim animale, sed spirituale erit: habens quidem carnis, sed sine ulla carnali corruptione, substantiam.—*August. de Civ.* lib. xxii. cap. 24.

for ever; farewell, my hard and rocky heart; farewell, my proud and unbelieving heart; farewell, atheistical, idolatrous, worldly heart; farewell, my sensual, carnal heart: and now welcome most holy, heavenly nature, which, as it must be employed in beholding the face of God, so is it full of God alone, and delighteth in nothing else but him. Oh, who can question the love which he doth so sweetly taste, or doubt of that which with such joy he feeleth! Farewell, repentance, confession, and supplication; farewell, the most of hope and faith, and welcome love, and joy, and praise. I shall now have my harvest without ploughing or sowing, my wine without the labour of the vintage, my joy without a preacher, or a promise, even all from the face of God himself. That is the sight that is worth the seeing; that is the book that is worth the reading. Whatever mixture is in the streams, there is nothing but pure joy in the fountain. Here shall I be encircled with eternity, and come forth no more; here shall I live, and ever live, and praise my Lord, and ever, ever, ever praise him. My face will not wrinkle, nor my hair be gray; but this mortal shall have put on immortality, and this corruptible, incorruption, and death shall be swallowed up in victory. O death! where is now thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory? The date of my lease will no more expire, nor shall I trouble myself with thoughts of death, nor lose my joys through fear of losing them. When millions of ages are past, my glory is but beginning; and when millions more are past, it is no nearer ending. Every day is all noontide, and every month is May or harvest, and every year is there a jubilee, and every age is full manhood; and all this is one eternity. O blessed eternity! the glory of my glory! the perfection of my perfection!

Ah, drowsy, earthy, blockish heart, how coldly dost thou think of this reviving day! Dost thou sleep, when thou thinkest of eternal rest? Art thou hanging earthward, when heaven is before thee? Hadst thou rather sit thee down in dirt and dung, than walk in the court of the palace of God? Dost thou now remember thy worldly business; art thou looking back to the Sodom of thy lusts; art thou thinking of thy delights and merry company? Wretched heart! is it better to be there, than above with God; is the company better; are the pleasures greater? Come away, make no excuse, make no delay, God commands, and I command thee, come away; gird up thy loins; ascend the mount, and look about thee with seriousness and

with faith. Look thou not back upon the way of the wilderness, except it be when thine eyes are dazzled with the glory, or when thou wouldst compare the kingdom with that howling desert, that thou mayest more sensibly perceive the mighty difference. Fix thine eye upon the sun itself, and look not down to earth as long as thou art able to behold it; except it be to discern more easily the brightness of the one, by the darkness of the other.[y] Yonder, far above yonder, is thy Father's glory; yonder must thou dwell when thou leavest this earth; yonder must thou remove, O my soul, when thou departest from this body; and when the power of thy Lord hath raised it again, and joined thee to it, yonder must thou live with God for ever.[z] There is the glorious New Jerusalem, the gates of pearl, the foundations of pearl, the streets and pavements of transparent gold. Seest thou that sun which lighteth all this world? Why, it must be taken down as useless there, or the glory of heaven will darken it, and put it out: even thyself shall be as bright as yonder shining sun. God will be the sun, and Christ the light, and in his light shalt thou have light.

What thinkest thou, O my soul, of this most blessed state? What! dost thou stagger at the promise of God through unbelief? Though thou say nothing, or profess belief, yet thou speakest so coldly and so customarily, that I much suspect thee. I know thy infidelity is thy natural vice. Didst thou believe indeed, thou wouldst be more affected with it. Why, hast thou not it under the hand, and seal, and oath of God? Can God lie; or he that is the truth itself, be false? Foolish wretch! What need hath God to flatter thee, or deceive thee; why

[y] That even the philosophers understood that there was a heaven, see Fernelius 'De Abdit. Rer. Caus.' cap. 9, and Aristot. 'De Cœlo,' lib. ii. cap. 9. Manifestum est quod neque locus, neque vacuum, neque tempus est extra cœlum. In omni enim loco corpus esse possibile est: vacuum autem esse dicunt, in quo non est corpus, possibile autem est esse. Tempus autem est numerus motus; motus autem sine naturali corpore non est, &c. Quapropter neque quæ illic sunt, nata sunt in loco esse; neque tempus ipsa facit senescere, neque ulla transmutatio ullius eorum est, quæ super extima disposita sunt latione, sed inalterabilia et impassibilia, optimam habentia vitam et per se sufficientissimam, perseverant toto ævo, &c.

[z] Nec mireris si Deum non videas; vento et flatibus omnia impelluntur, vibrantur, agitantur, et sub oculis tamen non venit ventus et flatus. Solem, qui videndi omnibus causa est, intueri non possumus; radiis acies submovetur; obtutus intuentis hebetatur; et si diutius inspicias, omnis visus extinguitur. Qui ipsum solis artificem, illum luminis fontem possis sustinere, cum te ab ejus fulgoribus avertas, a fulminibus abscondas? Deum oculis carnalibus vis videre, cum ipsam animam tuam, qua vivificaris et loqueris, nec aspicere possis, nec tueri?—*Minutius Fælix Octav.* p. 393.

should he promise thee more than he will perform? Art thou not his creature, a little crumb of dust, a crawling worm; ten thousand times more below him, than this fly or worm is below thee? Wouldst thou flatter a flea, or a worm? What need hast thou of them? If they do not please thee, thou wilt crush them dead, and never accuse thyself of cruelty: why, yet they are thy fellow-creatures, made of as good metal as thyself, and thou hast no authority over them but what thou hast received: how much less need hath God of thee; or why should he care, if thou perish in thy folly? Cannot he govern thee without either flattery or falsehood? Cannot he easily make thee obey his will, and as easily make thee suffer for thy disobedience? Wretched, unbelieving heart! tell a fool, or tell a tyrant, or tell some false and flattering man, of drawing their subjects by false promises, and procuring obedience by deceitful means; but do thou not dare to charge the wise, almighty, faithful God with this. Above all men, it beseems not thee to doubt, either of this Scripture being his infallible word, or of the performance of this word to thyself. Hath not argument convinced thee; may not thy own experience utterly silence thee? How oft hath this Scripture been verified for thy good! how many of the promises have been performed to thee! hath it not quickened thee, and converted thee; hast thou not felt in it something more than human? Would God perform another promise; or would he so powerfully concur with a feigned word? If thou hadst seen the miracles that Christ and his apostles wrought, thou wouldst never surely have questioned the truth of their doctrine: why, they delivered it down by such undoubted testimony, that it may be called divine as well as human. Nay, hast thou not seen its prophecies fulfilled; hast thou not lived in an age wherein such wonders have been wrought, that thou hast now no cloak for thy unbelief; hast thou not seen the course of nature changed, and works beyond the power of nature wrought; and all this in the fulfilling of the Scripture? Hast thou so soon forgotten since nature failed me, and strength failed me, and blood, and spirits, and flesh, and friends, and all means did utterly fail; and how art and reason had sentenced me for dead: and yet how God revoked the sentence; and at the request of praying, believing saints, did turn thee to the promise which he verified to thee: and canst thou yet question the truth of this Scripture? Hast thou seen so much to confirm thy faith, in the great actions of seven years past, and canst thou yet doubt? Thou hast seen

signs and wonders, and art thou yet so unbelieving? O wretched heart! hath God made thee a promise of rest, and wilt thou come short of it, and shut out thyself through unbelief? Thine eyes may fail thee, thy ears deceive thee, and all thy senses prove delusions, sooner than a promise of God can delude thee. Thou mayest be surer of that which is written in the word, than if thou see it with thine eyes, or feel it with thy hands. Art thou sure thou livest, or sure that this is earth which thou standest on? Art thou sure thine eyes do see the sun? As sure is all this glory to the saints, as sure shall I be higher than yonder stars, and live for ever in the holy city, and joyfully sound forth the praise of my Redeemer, if I be not shut out by this evil heart of unbelief, causing me to depart from the living God.

And is this rest so sweet, and so sure? O, then, what means the careless world? Do they know what it is they so neglect; did they ever hear of it, or are they yet asleep, or are they dead! Do they know for certain that the crown is before them, while they thus sit still, or follow trifles? Undoubtedly they are quite beside themselves, to mind so much their provision in the way, and strive, and care, and labour for trifles, when they are hasting so fast to another world, and their eternal happiness lies at stake. Were there left one spark of wit or reason, they would never sell their rest for toil, or sell their glory for worldly vanities, nor venture heaven for the pleasure of a sin. Ah, poor men! that you would once consider what you hazard, and then you would scorn these tempting baits. O blessed for ever be that love that hath rescued me from this mad, bewitching darkness!

Draw nearer yet, then, O my soul, bring forth thy strongest burning love; here is matter for it to work upon; here is something truly worth thy loving. O see what beauty presents itself! is it not exceeding lovely? is not all the beauty in the world contracted here? is not all other beauty deformity to it? dost thou need to be persuaded how to love? [d] Here is a feast for thine eyes; a feast for all the powers of thy soul: dost thou need to be entreated to feed upon it; canst thou love a little shining earth; canst thou love a walking piece of clay; and canst thou not love that God, that Christ, that glory, which is so truly and unmeasurably lovely? Thou canst love thy friend, because he loves thee: and is the love of thy friend like the love

[d] Pondus meum amor meus; eo feror, quocunque feror. Ibi nos collocavit voluntas bona, ut nihil velimus aliud quam permanere illic in æternum.—*Confession* 13*th*, commonly called *Austin's*.

of Christ? Their weeping or bleeding for thee, doth not ease thee, nor stay the course of thy tears or blood: but the tears and blood that fell from thy Lord, have all a sovereign healing virtue, and are waters of life, and balsam to thy faintings and thy sores. O my soul, if love deserve and should procure love, what incomprehensible love is here before thee! Pour out all the store of thy affections here; and all is too little. O that it were more! O that it were many thousand times more! Let him be first served, that served thee first. Let him have the first-born and strength of thy love, who parted with strength and life in love to thee. If thou hast any to spare when he hath his part, let it be imparted then to standers-by. See what a sea of love is here before thee; cast thyself in, and swim with the arms of thy love in this ocean of his love. Fear not lest thou shouldst be drowned or consumed in it. Though it seem as the scalding furnace of lead, yet thou wilt find it but mollifying oil:[b] though it seem a furnace of fire, and the hottest that ever was kindled upon earth, yet it is the fire of love and not of wrath; a fire most effectual to extinguish fire; never intended to consume, but to glorify thee: venture into it, then, in thy believing meditations, and walk in these flames with the Son of God: when thou art once in, thou wilt be sorry to come forth again.[c] O my soul! what wantest thou here to provoke thy love? Dost thou love for excellency? Why, thou seest nothing below but baseness, except as they relate to thy enjoyments above. Yonder is the Goshen, the region of light; this is a land of palpable darkness. Yonder twinkling stars, that shining moon, the radiant sun, are all but as the lanterns hanged out at thy Father's house, to light thee while thou walkest in the dark streets of the earth: but little dost thou know (ah, little indeed!) the glory and blessed mirth that is within! Dost thou love for suitableness? Why, what person more suitable than Christ? His godhead, his manhood, his

[b] In which it is said St. John was cast, and came out anointed only.

[c] Subtilius naturam amoris contemplemur. Totam compositam et quadrantem Deo inveniemus; nulli alicui rei aptius, nulli decentius, nulli fructuosius cohærere: imo cæteris perdite, turpiter, inæqualiter. Quid infœlicius quam amator, et non Dei! Amor est quidam sui exitus; quædam a se peregrinatio, cum quodam spontaneo interitu. Voluntaria mors est; et quoddam sine necessitate fatum. A se ab est qui amat; etenim de se cogitat nihil, provident nihil: et cum cogitet de se, nec in se, neque secum cogitabit. Illud est arcanum ingeniosi affectus, mori cum fœnore; perire cum lucro vitæ: si amare scias, si ames inquam Deum, ista est amandi ars. Quod restat ex amante, amatus est.—*Nivemberg. de Arte Volunt.* lib. iv. c. 23, 24, pp. 287, 288.

fulness, his freeness, his willingness, his constancy; do all proclaim him thy most suitable friend. What state more suitable to thy misery, than that of mercy; or to thy sinfulness and baseness, than that of honour and perfection? What place more suitable to thee than heaven? Thou hast had a sufficient trial of this world. Dost thou find it agree with thy nature or desires; are these common abominations, these heavy sufferings, these unsatisfying vanities, suitable to thee? Or dost thou love for interest and near relation? Why, where hast thou better interest than in heaven; or where hast thou nearer relation than there? Dost thou love for acquaintance and familiarity? Why, though thine eyes have never seen thy Lord, yet he is never the further from thee; if thy son were blind, yet he would love thee his father, though he never saw thee. Thou hast heard the voice of Christ to thy very heart; thou hast received his benefits: thou hast lived in his bosom, and art thou not yet acquainted with him? It is he that brought thee seasonably and safely into the world: it is he that nursed thee up in thy tender infancy, and helped thee when thou couldst not help thyself: he taught thee to go, to speak, to read, to understand: he taught thee to know thyself and him: he opened thee that first window whereby thou sawest into heaven. Hast thou forgotten since thy heart was careless, and he did quicken it; and hard and stubborn, and he did soften it, and make it yield; when it was at peace, and he did trouble it; and whole, till he did break it; and broken, till he did heal it again? Hast thou forgotten the time, nay, the many, very many times, when he found thee in secret all in tears; when he heard thy dolorous sighs and groans, and left all to come and comfort thee; when he came in upon thee, and took thee up, as it were in his arms, and asked thee, Poor soul, what aileth thee? Dost thou weep, when I have wept so much?[c] Be of good cheer; thy wounds are saving, and not deadly. It is I that have made them, who mean thee no hurt: though I let out thy blood, I will not let out thy life.

O methinks I remember yet his voice, and feel those embracing arms that took me up: how gently did he handle me! how

[d] Voluntas seu amor vivificatur amore amoris; a quo habet ut sit volens seu libere amans, seu eligens.——Et si recte advertis, amor Dei non est quasi quis amet aliquod amatum, aliud ab amore; seu ubi non coincidit amor et amatum. Deus est amor; qui Deum amat, amorem amat.—*Card. Cusanus Exercitat.* vol. 2, lib. vii. p. 132. B.

carefully did he dress my wounds, and bind them up! Methinks I hear him still saying to me, Poor sinner, though thou hast dealt unkindly with me, and cast me off, yet will not I do so by thee; though thou hast set light by me and all my mercies, yet both I and all are thine; what wouldst thou have, that I can give thee; and what dost thou want that I cannot give thee? If any thing I have will pleasure thee, thou shalt have it: if any thing in heaven or earth will make thee happy, why it is all thine own. Wouldst thou have pardon? thou shalt have it; I freely forgive thee all the debt. Wouldst thou have grace and peace? thou shalt have them both. Wouldst thou have myself? why, behold I am thine, thy friend, thy lord, thy brother, thy husband, and thy head. Wouldst thou have the Father? why I will bring thee to him; and thou shalt have him in and by me. These were my Lord's reviving words: these were the melting, healing, raising, quickening passages of love. After all this, when I was doubtful of his love, methinks I yet remember his overcoming and convincing arguments. Why, sinner, have I done so much to testify my love, and yet dost thou doubt! Have I made thy believing it the condition of enjoying it, and yet dost thou doubt! Have I offered thee myself and love so long, and yet dost thou question my willingness to be thine! Why, what could I have done more than I have done; at what dearer rate should I tell thee that I love thee; read yet the story of my bitter passion, wilt thou not believe that it proceeded from love? Did I ever give thee cause to be so jealous of me, or to think so hardly of me, as thou dost? Have I made myself in the Gospel a lion to thine enemies, and a lamb to thee: and dost thou so overlook my lamb-like nature? Have I set mine arms and heart there open to thee, and wilt thou not believe but they are shut? Why, if I had been willing to let thee perish, I could have done it at a cheaper rate. What need I then have done and suffered so much; what need I follow thee with so long patience, and entreating? What dost thou tell me of thy wants; have I not enough for me and thee; and why dost thou so foolishly tell me of thy unworthiness, and thy sin? I had not died, if man had not sinned; if thou wert not a sinner, thou wert not for me; if thou wert worthy thyself, what shouldst thou do with my worthiness? Did I ever invite the worthy and the righteous; or did I ever save or justify such; or is there any such on earth? Hast thou nothing; art thou lost and miserable; art thou helpless and forlorn? Dost thou believe that I

am a sufficient Saviour, and wouldst thou have me? Why then take me; lo! I am thine; if thou be willing, I am willing, and neither sin nor devils shall break the match.

These, O these were the blessed words which his Spirit from his Gospel spoke unto me, till he made me cast myself at his feet, yea, into his arms, and to cry out, 'My Saviour and my Lord, thou hast broke my heart, thou hast revived my heart, thou hast overcome, thou hast won my heart; take it, it is thine: if such a heart can please thee, take it; if it cannot, make it such as thou wouldst have it.' Thus, O my soul, mayest thou remember the sweet familiarity thou hast had with Christ; therefore, if acquaintance will cause affection, O then let out thy heart unto him; it is he that hath stood by thy bed of sickness, that hath cooled thy heats, and eased thy pains, and refreshed thy weariness, and removed thy fears; he hath been always ready, when thou hast earnestly sought him; he hath given thee the meeting in public and in private; he hath been found of thee in the congregation, in thy house, in thy chamber, in the field, in the way as thou wast walking, in thy waking nights, in thy deepest dangers. Oh, if bounty and compassion be an attractive of love, how unmeasurably, then, am I bound to love him! All the mercies that have filled up my life do tell me this; all the places that ever I did abide in, all the societies and persons that I have had to deal with, every condition of life that I have passed through, all my employments, and all my relations, every change that hath befallen me, all tell me that the fountain is overflowing goodness. Lord! what a sum of love am I indebted to thee, and how doth my debt continually increase! How should I love again for so much love! But what! shall I dare to think of making thee requital; or of recompensing all thy love with mine? Will my mite requite thee for thy golden mines; my seldom wishes for thy constant bounty; or mine which is nothing, or not mine, for thine which is infinite, and thine own? Shall I dare to contend in love with thee; or set my borrowed, languid spark, against the element and sun of love? Can I love as high, as deep, as broad, as long as love itself![f] As much as he

[f] Quemadmodum umbram nostram superare non datur; quippe quæ tantum præit quantum progredimur, et æqua portione semper antecedit; neque supra caput esse potest corporis magnitudo, cum illud semper corpori superpositum sit: sic neque Deum largiendo vincere possumus. Neque enim quippiam largimur quod illius non sit, aut magnificentiam et liberalitatem antecedat; considera unde sit tibi id ipsum quod es, quod spiras, quod sapis, et id quod maximum est, quod Deum cognoscis, quod speras regnum cœlorum, æqualem angelis dignitatem, puram perfectamque gloriæ quam nunc in

that made me, and that made me love, that gave me all that little which I have:[f] both the heart, the hearth where it is kindled, the bellows, the fire, the fuel, and all were his; as I cannot match thee in the works of thy power, nor make, nor preserve, nor guide the world, so why should I think any more of matching thee in love. No, Lord, I yield, I am unable, I am overcome. O blessed conquest! go on victoriously, and still prevail, and triumph in thy love; the captive of love shall proclaim thy victory when thou leadest me in triumph from earth to heaven, from death to life, from the tribunal to the throne. Myself, and all that see it, shall acknowledge that thou hast prevailed, and all shall say, "Behold, how he loved him!" yet let me love thee in subjection to thy love, as thy redeemed captive, though not thy peer. Shall I not love at all, because I cannot reach thy measure? Or at least, let me heartily wish to love thee. O that I were able! O that I could feelingly say, 'I love thee,' even as I feel I love my friend and myself! Lord, that I could do it, but, alas! I cannot; fain I would, but, alas! I cannot. Would I not love thee, if I were but able? Though I cannot say, as thy apostle, 'Thou knowest that I love thee,' yet can I say, 'Lord, thou knowest that I would love thee.' But I speak not this to excuse my fault; it is a crime that admits of no excuse, and it is my own; it dwelleth as near me as my very heart; if my heart be my own, this sin is my own, yea, and more my own than my heart is. Lord, what shall this sinner do; the fault is my own, and yet I cannot help it. I am angry with my heart that it doth not love thee, and yet I feel it love thee never the more; I frown upon it, and yet it cares not; I threaten it, but it doth not feel; I chide it, and yet it doth not mend; I reason with it, and would fain persuade it, and yet I do not perceive it stir: I rear it up as a carcass upon its legs, but it neither goes nor stands. I rub and chafe it in the use of thine ordinances, and yet I feel it not warm within me.[g] O miserable man that I am! Unworthy soul! is not thine eye now upon the only lovely object? and art thou not beholden

speculis et ænigmatibus cernis contemplationem; quod factus es filius Dei, cohæres Christi (audacter dicam) et Deus ipse.—*Nazianz. in Orat. de Pauper. Amand. &c.*

[g] Quamdiu præsentem vitam vivimus, tamdiu cor nostrum, nec Deo perfecte plenum, nec omnino subjectum: unde innumera sunt quæ extra Deum amamus, et si Deum amantes et sitientes. At in cœlesti patria, subjectio ad Deum est omnimoda, et talis cui nihil amplius addi queat. Omnis metus actualis beati, in Deum fertur. Et sicut Deus nihil novit nec amat nisi seip-

to the ravishing glory of the saints? and yet dost thou not love? and yet dost thou not feel the fire break forth? Why, art thou not a soul; a living spirit? And is not thy love the choicest piece of thy life? Art thou not a rational soul? and shouldst thou not love according to reason's conduct? And doth it not tell thee that all is dirt and dung to Christ; that earth is a dungeon to the celestial glory? Art thou not a spirit thyself, and shouldst thou not love spiritually; even God, who is a Spirit, and the Father of spirits? Doth not every creature love their like? Why, my soul, art thou like to flesh, or gold, or stately buildings! Art thou like to meat and drink, or clothes? wilt thou love no higher than thy horse or swine? Hast thou nothing better to love than they? What is the beauty that thou hast so admired? Canst thou not even wink or think it at, all into darkness or deformity? When the night comes, it is nothing to thee; while thou hast gazed on it, it hath withered away; a botch or scab, the wrinkles of consuming sickness, or of age, do make it as loathsome as it was before delightful. Suppose but that thou sawest that beautiful carcass lying on the bier, or rotting in the grave, the skull dug up, and the bones scattered, where is now thy lovely object? Couldst thou sweetly embrace it when the soul is gone; or take any pleasure in it, when there is nothing left that is like thyself! Ah! why then dost thou love a skinful of dirt, and canst love no more the heavenly glory? What thinkest thou? Shalt thou love when thou comest there; when thou seest; when thou dost enjoy; when the Lord shall take thy carcass from the grave, and make thee shine as the sun in glory, and when thou shalt everlastingly dwell in the blessed presence? Shalt thou then love, or shalt thou not? Is not the place a meeting of lovers? Is not the life a state of love? Is it not the great marriage-day of the Lamb, when he will embrace and entertain his spouse with love? Is not the employment there the work of love, where the souls with Christ do take their fill? Oh, then, my soul, begin it here. Be sick of love now, that thou mayest be well with love there; (Cant. v. 8; Rom. viii. 35;) keep thyself now in the love of God, (Jude 21,)

sum, aut in seipso: ita sanctus quia plane Deiformis, nihil novit nec ama nisi Deum aut in Deo. Deus cuilibet sanctorum sicut sibi sufficientia est, plenitudo est, omnia est, et omnem rationalis mentis potentialitatem adimplet. Quod non erit profecto, si sanctos aliquid extra Deum videre dicas: si enim aliquid extra Deum amant, illud ipsum cum Deo in eorum corde hospitabitur. Et quomodo Deus, O homo, tibi sufficientia, plenitudo, omnia est, si ita est?—*Gibieuf*, lib. ii. c. 27. sect. 7. p. 483.

and let neither life nor death nor any thing separate thee from it, and thou shalt be kept in the fulness of love for ever, and nothing shall embitter or abate thy pleasure; for the Lord hath prepared a city of love, a place for the communicating of love to his chosen, and those that love his name shall dwell there. (Psalm cvii. 36.)

Awake, then, O my drowsy soul! Who but an owl or mole would love this world's uncomfortable darkness, when they are called forth to live in light? To sleep under the light of grace is unreasonable, much more in the approach of the light of glory. The night of thy ignorance and misery is past, the day of glorious light is at hand; this is the day-break betwixt them both. Though thou see not yet the sun itself appear, methinks the twilight of promise should revive thee. Come forth, then, O my dull, congealed spirits, and leave these earthly cells to dumpish sadness, and hear thy Lord that bids thee rejoice, and again rejoice! Thou hast lain here long enough in thy prison of flesh, where Satan hath been thy gaoler, and the things of this world have been the stocks for the feet of thy affections; where cares have been thy irons, and fears thy scourge, and the bread and water of affliction thy food; where sorrows have been thy lodging, and thy sins and foes have made the bed; and a carnal, hard, unbelieving heart have been the iron gates and bars that have kept thee in, that thou couldst scarce have leave to look through the lattices, and see one glimpse of the immortal light. The Angel of the covenant now calls thee, and strikes thee, and bids thee arise and follow him. Up, O my soul, and cheerfully obey, and thy bolts and bars shall all fly open. Do thou obey, and all will obey; follow the Lamb which way soever he leads thee. Art thou afraid because thou knowest not whither? Can the place be worse than where thou art? Shouldst thou fear to follow such a guide? Can the sun lead thee to a state of darkness; or can he mislead thee, that is the light of every man that cometh into the world? Will he lead thee to death, who died to save thee from it; or can he do thee any hurt, who for thy sake did suffer so much? Follow him, and he will show thee the paradise of God; he will give thee a sight of the New Jerusalem; he will give thee a taste of the tree of life. Sit no longer, then, by the fire of earthly, common comforts, whither the cold of carnal fears and sorrows did drive thee; thy winter is past, and wilt thou house thyself still in earthly thoughts, and confine thyself to drooping and dulness? Even the silly flies

will leave their holes when the winter is over, and the sun draws near them; the ants will stir, the fishes rise, the birds will sing, the earth look green, and all with joyful note will tell thee the spring is come. Come forth, then, O my drooping soul, and lay aside thy winter mourning robes; let it be seen in thy believing joys and praise, that the day is appearing, and the spring is come, and as now thou seest thy comforts green, thou shalt shortly see them white and ripe for harvest; and then thou who art now called forth to see and taste, shalt be called forth to reap, and gather, and take possession. Shall I suspend and delay my joys till then? Should not the joys of the spring go before the joys of harvest? Is title nothing before possession? Is the heir in no better a state than the slave? My Lord hath taught me to rejoice in hope of his glory, and to see it through the bars of a prison; and even when I am persecuted for righteousness' sake, when I am reviled and all manner of evil sayings are said against me falsely for his sake, then he hath commanded me to rejoice, and be exceeding glad, because of this my great reward in heaven. (Rom. v. 2; Matt. v. 10—12.) How justly is an unbelieving heart possessed by sorrow, and made a prey to cares and fears, when itself doth create them, and thrust away its offered peace and joy! I know, it is the pleasure of my bounteous Lord, that none of his family should want for comfort, nor live such a poor and miserable life, nor look with such a famished, dejected face. I know, he would have my joys exceed my sorrows; and as much as he delights in the humble and contrite, yet doth he more delight in the soul as it delighteth in him. I know, he taketh no pleasure in my self-procured sadness; nor would he call on me to weep and mourn but that it is the only way to these delights. Would I spread the table before my guest, and bring him forth my best provision, and bid him sit down and eat and welcome, if I did not unfeignedly desire he should do so? Hath my Lord spread me a table in this wilderness, and furnished it with the promises of everlasting glory, and set before me angels' food, and broached for me the side of his beloved Son, that I might have a better wine than the blood of the grape? Doth he so frequently, importunately invite me to sit down, and draw forth my faith, and feed, and spare not; nay, hath he furnished me to that end with reason, and faith, and a rejoicing disposition; and yet is it possible that he should be unwilling of my joys? Never think it, O my unbelieving soul, nor dare to charge him with thy

uncomfortable heaviness, who offered thee the foretaste of the highest delight that heaven doth afford, and God can bestow. Doth he not bid thee delight thyself in the Lord, and promise to give thee then the desires of thy heart? (Psal. xxxvii. 4.) Hath he not charged thee to rejoice evermore; (Thess. v. 16;) yea, to sing aloud and shout for joy? (Psalm xxxii. 11; xlvii. 1.) Why should I then draw back discouraged? My God is willing, if I were but willing. He is delighted in my delights. He would fain have it my constant frame and daily business, to be near to him in my believing meditations, and to live in the sweetest thoughts of his goodness, and to be always delighting my soul in himself. O blessed work; employment fit for the sons of God!

But, ah! my Lord, thy feast is nothing to me without an appetite; thou must give a stomach as well as meat. Thou hast set the dainties of heaven before me, but alas! I am blind, and cannot see them; I am sick, and cannot relish them; I am so benumbed, that I cannot put forth a hand to take them. What is the glory of sun and moon to a clod of earth? Thou knowest I need thy subjective grace, as well as thine objective, and that thy work upon mine own distempered soul, is not the smallest part of my salvation; I therefore humbly beg this grace, that as thou hast opened heaven unto me in thy blessed word, so thou wouldest open mine eyes to see it, and my heart to affect it; else heaven will be no heaven to me. Awake, therefore, O thou Spirit of life, and breathe upon thy graces in me; blow upon the garden of my heart, that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my Beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits; (Cant. iv. 16;) and take me by the hand, and lift me up from earth thyself; that I may fetch one walk in the garden of glory, and see by faith what thou hast laid up for them that love thee and wait for thee.

Away, then, you soul-tormenting cares and fears! Away, you importunate heart-vexing sorrows! At least forbear me a little while; stand by, and trouble not my aspiring soul; stay here below whilst I go up, and see my rest. The way is strange to me, but not to Christ. There was the eternal dwelling of his glorious deity, and thither hath he also brought his assumed glorified flesh. It was his work to purchase it; it is his work to prepare it, and to prepare me for it, and to bring me to it. The eternal God of truth hath given me his promise, his seal, and his oath to assure me, that believing in Christ, I shall not perish, but have everlasting life. (John iii. 16.) Thither shall

my soul be speedily removed, and my body very shortly follow. It is not so far but he that is everywhere can bring me thither; nor so difficult and unlikely, but omnipotency can effect it.[h] And though this unbelief may diminish my delights, and much abate my joys in the way, yet shall it not abate the love of my Redeemer, nor make the promise of none effect. And can my tongue say, that I shall shortly and surely live with God, and yet my heart not leap within me? Can I say it believingly, and not rejoicingly? Ah! faith, how sensible do I now perceive thy weakness! Ah! unbelief, if I had never heard or known it before, yet how sensibly now do I perceive thy malicious tyranny? But though thou darken my light, and dull my life, and suppress my joys, yet shalt thou not be able to conquer and destroy me. There shall I and my joys survive when thou art dead; and though thou envy all my comforts, yet some in despite of thee I shall even here receive; but were it not for thee, what abundance might I have! The light of heaven would shine into my heart, and I might be as familiar there as I am on earth.

Come away, my soul, then, stop thine ears to the ignorant language of infidelity. Thou art able to answer all its arguments, or if thou be not, yet tread them under thy feet. Come away, stand not looking on that grave, nor turning those bones, nor reading thy lesson now in the dust. Those lines will soon be wiped out, but lift up thy head and look to heaven, and read thy instructions in those fixed stars. Or yet look higher than those eyes can see, into that foundation which standeth sure,[i] and see thy name in golden letters, written before the foundations of the world, in the book of life, of the slain Lamb. What if an angel from heaven should tell thee that there is a mansion prepared for thee; that it shall certainly be thine own, and

[h] Multi nobis videmur, sed Deo admodum pauci sumus: nos gentes nationesque distinguimus, sed Deo una domus est mundus hic totus. Reges tantum regni sui per officia ministrorum universa novere; Deo indiciis opus non est. Non solum in oculis ejus, sed in sinu vivimus.—*Min. Fœlix, Octav.* p. 394.

[i] 2 Tim. ii. 19; Rev. xiii. 8. As defined habitations are distributed by order to blessed spirits, so holy souls shall be set in holy places; and being transported wholly from the whole, shall come to a better condition in better places; not embracing the divine contemplation as in or by a glass; but being welcomed at the everlasting feast of the evident, truly pure, sincere, and everlasting contemplation of God, with which the souls that abound with love can never be satisfied, and enjoying unmeasurable joys for ever and for ever, they remain honoured, as I may say, with the identity of the universal excellency.—*Clem. Alex. Stromat.* lib. vii. prope init.

thou shalt possess it for ever, would not such a message make thee glad; and dost thou make light of the infallible word of promises, which were delivered by the Spirit, and by the Son himself? Suppose thou hadst seen a fiery chariot come for thee, and fetch thee up to heaven like Elias, would not this rejoice thee? Why, my Lord hath acquainted me, and assured me, that the soul of a Lazarus, a beggar, goes not forth of its corrupted flesh, but a convoy of angels are ready to attend it, and bring it to the comforts in Abraham's bosom. Shall a drunkard be so merry among his cups; and a glutton in his delicious fare; and the proud in his bravery and dignity; and the lustful wanton in the enjoyment of his mate? And shall not I rejoice who must shortly be in heaven? How glad is voluptuous youth of their playtimes and holidays? Why, in heaven, I shall have an everlasting holiday of pleasure. Can meat and drink delight me when I hunger and thirst? Can I find pleasure in walks, and gardens, and convenient dwellings? Can beauteous sights delight mine eyes, and odours my smell, and melody mine ears? and shall not the forethought of the celestial bliss delight me? My beast is glad of his fresh pasture, and his liberty, and his rest; and shall not I? What delight have I found in my private studies, especially when they have prospered to the increase of my knowledge? Methinks I could bid the world farewell, and immure myself among my books, and look forth no more (were it a lawful course) but, as Heinsius, in his library at Leyden, shut the doors upon me, and as in the lap of eternity, among those divine souls, employ myself in sweet content, and pity the rich and great ones who know not this happiness. Sure then it is a high delight indeed which in the true lap of eternity is enjoyed. If Lipsius thought, when he did but read Seneca, that he was even upon Olympus' top, above mortality and human things; what a case shall I be in, when I am beholding Christ? If Julius Scaliger thought twelve verses in Lucan better than the whole German empire, what shall I think mine inheritance worth? If the mathematics alone are as delectable as their students do profess, that they should think it sweet to live and die in those studies, how delectable, then, will my life be, when I shall fully and clearly know those things which the learned do not know but doubtfully and darkly? In one hour shall I see all difficulties vanish; and all my doubts in physics, metaphysics, politics, medicine, &c. shall be resolved; so happy are the students of that uni-

versity! Yea, all the depths of divinity will be uncovered to me, and all difficult knots untied, and the book unsealed, and mine eyes opened. For in knowing God, I shall know all things that are fit or good for the creature to know. There Commenius's attempt is perfected, and all the sciences reduced to one. Seneca thought that he who lived without books, was buried alive: but had he known what it is to enjoy God in glory, he would have said indeed, that to live without him is to be buried alive in hell.

If Apollonius travelled into Ethiopia and Persia to consult with the learned there; and if Plato and Pythagoras left their country to see those wise Egyptian priests; and if, as Hierom saith, many travelled a thousand miles to see and speak with eloquent Livy; and if the Queen of Sheba came from Ethiopia to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and see his glory; O how gladly should I leave this country, how cheerfully should I pass from earth to heaven, to see the glory of that eternal Majesty; and to attain myself that height of wisdom, in comparison of which the most learned on earth are but silly, brutish fools and idiots! If Bernard were so ravished with the delights of his monastery, where he lived in poverty, without the common pleasures of the world, because of its green banks and shady bowers, and herbs, and trees, and various objects to feed the eyes, and fragrant smells, and sweet and various tunes of birds, together with the opportunity of devout contemplations, that he cries out in admiration, 'Lord! what abundance of delights dost thou provide, even for the poor!' how then shall I be ravished with the description of the court of heaven, where, instead of herbs and trees and birds and bowers, I shall enjoy God and my Redeemer, angels, saints, and inexpressible pleasures: and therefore should, with more admiration, cry out, 'Lord, what delights hast thou provided for us miserable and unworthy wretches that wait for thee!' If the heaven of glass, which the Persian emperor framed, were so glorious a piece; and the heaven of silver, which the emperor Ferdinand sent to the great Turk, because of their rare artificial representations and motions; what will the heaven of the heavens then be, which is not formed by the art of man, nor beautified like these childish toys, but is the matchless palace of the great King, built by himself for the residence of his glory, and the perpetual entertainment of his beloved saints! Can a poor deluded Mahometan rejoice in expectation of a feigned, sensual paradise; and shall

not I rejoice in expectation of a certain glory?[h] If the honour of the ambitious or the wealth of the covetous person do increase, his heart is lifted up with his estate, as a boat that riseth with the rising of the water. If they have but a little more land or money than their neighbours, how easily you may see it in their countenance and carriage! How high do they look; how big do they speak; how stately and lofty do they demean themselves! and shall not the heavenly loftiness and height of my spirit discover my title to this promised land? Shall I be the adopted son of God, and co-heir with Christ of that blessed inheritance, and daily look when I am put into possession; and shall not this be seen in my joyful countenance? What if God had made me commander of the earth? What if the mountains would remove at my command? What if I could heal all diseases with a word or a touch? What if the infernal spirits were all at my command? Should I not rejoice in such privileges and honours as these? Yet is it my Saviour's command not to rejoice that the devils are subject to us; but in this to rejoice, that our names are written in heaven.

I cannot here enjoy my parents, or my near and beloved friends, without some delight; especially when I did too freely let out my affections to my friend, how sweet was that very exercise of my love! O, what will it then be to live in the perpetual love of God! For brethren here to live together in unity, how good and pleasant a thing is it! To see a family live in love; husbands, wife, parents, children, servants, doing all in love to one another. To see a town live together in love, without any envyings, brawlings, heart-burnings, or contentions, scorns, law-suits, factions, or divisions; but every man loving his neighbour as himself, and thinking they can never do too much for one another, but striving to go beyond each other in love. Oh! how happy and delectable a sight is this! O, sweetest bands, saith Seneca, which bind so happily, that those who are so bound do love their binders, and desire still to be bound

[h] Th' imperial palace, where the eternal treasures
Of nectar flow; where everlasting pleasures
Are heaped up, where an immortal May
In blissful beauties flourisheth for aye:
Where life still lives; where God his 'sizes holds;
Environ'd round with seraphims and souls,
Bought with his precious blood, whose glorious flight
Yerst mounted earth above the heavens bright.'
Du Bartas in the 2nd day of the 1st week.

more closely, and even reduced into one! Oh! then, what a blessed society will be the family of heaven, and those peaceable inhabitants of the New Jerusalem; where is no division, nor dissimilitude, nor differing judgments, nor disaffection, nor strangeness, nor deceitful friendship; never an angry thought or look, never a cutting, unkind expression; but all are one in Christ, who is one with the Father, and live in the love of Love himself.[1] Cato could say that the soul of a lover dwelleth in the person whom he loveth: and therefore we say, The soul is not more where it liveth and enliveneth, than where it loveth.[k] How near, then, will my soul be closed to God, and how sweet must that conjunction be, when I shall so heartily, strongly, and incessantly love him. As the bee lies sucking and satiating herself with the sweetness of the flower; or rather, as the child lies sucking the mother's breast, inclosed in her arms, and sitting in her lap; even so shall my loving soul be still feeding on the sweetness of the God of love. Ah! wretched, fleshly, unbelieving heart, that can think of such a day, and work, and life as this, with so low, and dull, and feeble joys, but my enjoying joys will be more lively.

How delectable is it to me to behold and study these inferior works of God! to read those anatomical lectures of Du Bartas, upon this great dissected body! What a beautiful fabric is this great house which here we dwell in! The floor so dressed with various herbs, and flowers, and trees, and watered with springs, and rivers, and seas! The roof so wide expanded, so admirably adorned, such astonishing workmanship in every part! The studies of an hundred ages more, if the world should last so long, would not discover the mysteries of divine skill, which are to be found in the narrow compass of our bodies. What anatomist is not amazed in his search and observations! What wonders, then, do sun, and moon, and stars, and orbs, and seas, and winds, and fire, and air, and earth, &c. afford us! And hath God prepared such a house for our silly, sinful, corruptible flesh, and for a soul imprisoned! And doth he bestow so many millions of wonderful rarities, even upon his enemies! O, then,

[1] Boeth. lib. ii. met. 8. O fœlix hominum genus, Si vestros animos amor, Quo cœlum regitur, regat!

[k] Eras. Apothegm.: Anima est ubi amat, non ubi animat; which Gibieuf expoundeth thus: Quandoquidem id ipsum quod amat est et actus et anima, id autem quod animat subjicitur ei, ut actui potentia: major verò est dependentia potentiæ sive subjecti ab actu, quam contra actus à subjecto et potentia. —*Gibieuf de Libertate Dei*, lib. ii. c. 26. sect. 8. p. 175.

what a dwelling must that needs be, which he prepared for pure, refined, spiritual, glorified ones; and which he will bestow only upon his dearly beloved children, whom he hath chosen out, to make his mercy on them glorified and admired! As far as our perfected glorified bodies will excel this frail and corruptible flesh, so far will the glory of the New Jerusalem exceed all the present glory of the creatures. The change upon our mansion will be proportionable to the change upon ourselves. Arise, then, O my soul, by these steps in thy contemplation, and let thy thoughts of that glory, were it possible, as far in sweetness exceed thy thoughts of the excellencies below. Fear not to go out of this body, and this world, when thou must make so happy a change as this; but say as Zuingerus, when he was dying, "I am glad, and even leap for joy, that at last the time is come, wherein that, even that mighty Jehovah, whose majesty, in my search of nature, I have admired; whose goodness I have adored; whom in faith I have desired, whom I have sighed for; will now show himself to me face to face:" and let that be the unfeigned sense of my heart, which Camerarius left in his will should be written on his monument, "Vita mihi mors est, mors mihi vita nova est;" "Life is to me a death, death is to me a new life."[1]

Moreover, how wonderful and excellent are the works of Providence, even in this life! To see the great God to engage himself, and set a-work his attributes, for the safety and advancement of a few humble, despicable praying persons! O what a joyful time will it then be, when so much love, and mercy, and wisdom, and power, and truth, shall be manifested and glorified in the saint's glorification!'

How delightful is it to my soul, to review the working of Providence for myself, and to read over the records and catalogues of those special mercies wherewith my life hath been adorned and sweetened! How oft have my prayers been heard! and my tears regarded, and my groaning, troubled soul relieved, and my Lord hath bid me be of good cheer! He hath healed me when in respect of means I was incurable. He hath helped me when I was helpless. In the midst of my supplica-

[1] Gaudeo ego atque adeo exulto, jam tandem illuxisse tempus, quo ille, ille præpotens Jehova, cujus majestatem in naturæ indagatione miratus sum, veneratus quoque bonitatem, quem fide desideravi, quem suspiravi, a facie jam se mihi ad faciem visendum exhibebit.—*Melchior Adam in vitis Germanorum Medicorum*, p. 416.

tions hath he eased and revived me. He hath taken me up from my knees, and from the dust where I have lain in sorrow and despair: even the cries which have been occasioned by distrust, hath he regarded; what a support are these experiences to my faithful unbelieving heart! These clear testimonies of my Father's love, do put life into my afflicted, drooping spirit.

Oh, then, what a blessed day will that be, when I shall have all mercy, perfection of mercy, nothing but mercy, and fully enjoy the Lord of mercy himself! When I shall stand on the shore, and look back upon the raging seas which I have safely passed! When I shall, in safe and full possession of glory, look back upon all my pains and troubles, and fears and tears, and upon all the mercies which I here received; and then shall behold the glory enjoyed there, which was the end of all this. O, what a blessed view will that be! O glorious prospect which I shall have on the celestial Mount Zion! Is it possible that there should be any defect of joy; or my heart not raised, when I am so raised? If one drop of lively faith were mixed with these considerations, Oh! what work would they make in my breast; and what a heaven-ravished heart should I carry within me! Fain would I believe; "Lord, help my unbelief."

Yet further, consider, O my soul, how sweet have the very ordinances been unto thee; what raptures hast thou had in prayer, and under heavenly sermons; what gladness in days of thanksgiving, after eminent deliverances to the church, or to thyself; what delight do I find in the sweet society of the saints; to be among my humble faithful neighbours and friends; to join with them in the frequent worship of God; to see their growth and stability, and soundness of understanding; to see those daily added to the church which shall be saved! O then what delight shall I have to see the perfected church in heaven, and to join with these and all the saints in another kind of worship than we can here conceive of! How sweet is it to join in the high praises of God in the solemn assemblies! How glad have I been to go up to the house of God, especially after long restraint by sickness, when I have been as Hezekiah released, and re-admitted to join with the people of God, and to set forth the praises of my great Deliverer! How sweet is my work in preaching the Gospel, and inviting sinners to the marriage-feast of the Lamb, and opening to them the treasures of free grace? Especially when God blesseth my endeavours with plenteous

success, and giveth me to see the fruit of my labours; even this alone hath been a greater joy to my heart, than if I had been made the lord of all the riches on earth.

O how can my heart then conceive that joy, which I shall have in my admittance into the celestial temple, and into the heavenly host, that shall do nothing but praise the Lord for ever! when we shall say to Christ, "Here am I, and the children thou hast given me;" and when Christ shall present us all to his Father, and all are gathered, and the body completed! If the very word of God were sweeter to Job than his necessary food, (Job xxiii. 12;) and to Jeremy, was the very joy and rejoicing of his heart, (Jer. xv. 16;) and to David, was sweeter than the honey and honeycomb, so that he crieth out, O how I love thy law; it is my meditation continually: and if thy law had not been my delight, I had perished in my troubles, (Psal. cxix. 97; 92, 70, 77, &c.) O then how blessed a day will that be, when we shall fully enjoy the Lord of this word; and shall need these written precepts and promises no more; but shall, instead of these love-letters, enjoy our Beloved, and instead of these promises, have the happiness in possession, and read no book but the face of the glorious God! How far would I go to see one of those blessed angels, which appeared to Abraham, to Lot, to John, &c., or to speak with Enoch, or Elias, or any saint, who had lived with God; especially if he would resolve all my doubts, and describe to me the celestial habitations! How much more desirable must it needs be to live with these blessed saints and angels, and to see and possess as well as they! It is written of Erastus, that he was so desirous to learn, that it would be sweet to him even to die, so he might but be resolved of those doubtful questions wherein he could not satisfy himself. How sweet then should it be to me to die, that I may not only be resolved of all my doubts, but also know what I never before did think of, and enjoy what before I never knew! It was a happy dwelling that the twelve apostles had with Christ; to be always in his company, and see his face, and hear him open to them the mysteries of the kingdom: but it will be another kind of happiness to dwell with him in glory. It was a rare privilege of Thomas to

° Discendi adeo fuit cupidus, ut mori fuerit ipsi suave, modo ex dubiis quæstionibus in quibus sibi ipse satisfacere non poterat, se posset expedire. —*Melch. Adam. in vita Erasti.* Debent velle addiscere etiam qui alterum in sepulchro pedem habent, inquit Calvinus Julian.—*I. C.*

put his fingers into his wounds to confirm his faith; and of John to be called the disciple whom Jesus loved, on whose breast at supper he was wont to lean. But it will be another kind of privilege which I shall enjoy when I shall see him in his glory, and not in his wounds; and shall enjoy a fuller sense of his love than John then did; and shall have the most hearty entertainment that heaven affordeth. If they that heard Christ speak on earth, were astonished at his wisdom and answers, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded from his mouth; how shall I be affected then to behold him in his majesty!

Rouse up thyself, O my soul, and consider; can the foresight of this glory make others embrace the stake, and kiss the faggot, and welcome the cross, and refuse deliverance? And can it not make thee cheerful under lesser sufferings; can it sweeten the flames to them; and can it not sweeten thy life, or thy sickness, or natural death? If a glimpse could make Moses's face to shine, and Peter on the mount so transported, and Paul so exalted, and John so wrapt up in the Spirit, why should it not somewhat revive me with delight?[p] Doubtless it would, if my thoughts were more believing: is it not the same heaven which they and I must live in; is not their God, their Christ, their crown and mine, the same? Nay, how many a weak woman, or poor despised Christian have I seen, mean in parts, but rich in faith, who could rejoice and triumph in hope of this inheritance: and shall I look upon it with so dim an eye; so dull a heart; so dejected a countenance? Some small foretastes also I have had myself, though indeed small and seldom, through mine unbelief, and how much more delightful have they been than ever was any of these earthly things? The full enjoyment then will sure be sweet. Remember then this bunch of grapes which thou hast tasted of, and by them conjecture the fruitfulness of the land of promise. A grape in a wilderness cannot be like the plentiful vintage.

Consider also, O my soul, what a beauty is there in the imperfect graces of the Spirit here; (Col. iii. 10;) so great that

[p] If thy first glance so powerful be,
A mirth but open'd and seal'd up again;
What wonders shall we feel, when we shall see
Thy full-eyed love!
When thou shalt look us out of pain,
And one aspect of thine send in delight,
More than a thousand suns disburse in light
In heaven above.
Herbert's Poems, The Glance.

they are called the image of God. And can any created excellency have a more honourable title? Alas, how small a part are these of what we shall enjoy in our perfect state! O how precious a mercy should I esteem it, if God would but take off my bodily infirmities, and restore me to any comfortable measure of health and strength, that I might be able with cheerfulness to go through his work! How precious a mercy then will it be, to have all my corruptions quite removed, and my soul perfected, and my body also raised to so high a state as I now can neither desire nor conceive! Surely, as health of body so health of soul doth carry an inexpressible sweetness along with it. Were there no rewards besides, yet every gracious act is a reward and comfort. Never had I the least stirring of loving God, but I felt a heavenly sweetness accompany it; even the very act of loving was inexpressibly sweet. What a happy life should I here live, could I but love as much as I would, and as oft, and as long as I would! Could I be all love, and always loving, O my soul, what wouldst thou give for such a life! O had I such true and clear apprehensions of God, and such a true understanding of his word as I desire; could I but trust him as fully in all my straits; could I have that life which I would have in every duty; could I make God my constant desire and delight; I would not then envy the world their honours or pleasures; nor change my happiness with a Cæsar or Alexander. O my soul, what a blessed state wilt thou shortly be in, when thou shalt have far more of these than thou canst now desire! and shalt exercise all thy perfect graces upon God in presence and open sight, and not in the dark, and at a distance, as now!

And as there is so much worth in one gracious soul, so much more in a gracious society, and most of all in the whole body of Christ on earth: if there be any true beauty on earth, where should it be so likely as in the spouse of Christ? It is her that he adorneth with his jewels, and feasteth at his table; and keepeth for her always an open house and heart: he revealeth to her his secrets, and maintaineth constant converse with her: he is her constant guardian, and in every deluge incloseth her in his ark: he saith to her, Thou art all beautiful, my beloved! And is his spouse, while black, so comely? Is the afflicted, sinning, weeping, lamenting, persecuted church so excellent? O what then will be the church, when it is fully gathered and glorified; when it is ascended from the valley of tears to Mount Sion;

when it shall sin no more, nor weep, nor groan, nor suffer any more ?[q] The stars, or the smallest candle, are not darkened so much by the brightness of the sun, as the excellencies of the first temple will be by the celestial temple. The glory of the old Jerusalem will be darkness and deformity, to the glory of the New. It is said in Ezra iii. 12, that when the foundations of the second temple were laid, many of the ancient men who had seen the first house, did weep, i. e. because the second did come so far short of it: what cause then shall we have to shout for joy, when we shall see how glorious the heavenly temple is, and remember the meanness of the church on earth!

But, alas! what a loss am I at in the midst of my contemplation! I thought my heart had all this while followed after; but I see it doth not: and shall I let my understanding go on alone, or my tongue run on without affections? What life is in empty thoughts and words! neither God nor I find pleasure in them.

Rather let me run back again, and look, and find, and chide this lazy, loitering heart, that turneth off from such a pleasant work as this; where hast thou been, unworthy heart, while I was opening to thee the everlasting treasures? Didst thou sleep, or wast thou minding something else: or; dost thou think that this is all but a dream or fable, or as uncertain as the predictions of a presumptuous astrologer; or, hast thou lost thy life and rejoicing power? Art thou not ashamed to complain so much of an uncomfortable life, and to murmur at God for filling thee with sorrows, when he offereth thee in vain the delights of angels, and when thou treadest under foot these transcendent pleasures? Thou wilfully pinest away in grief, and art ready to charge thy Father with unkindness for making thee only a vessel of displeasure, a sink of sadness, a skin-full of groans, a snow-ball of tears, a channel for waters of affliction to run in, the fuel of fears, and the carcass which cares do consume and prey upon, when in the mean time thou mightest live

[q] With cloudy cares th' one's muffled up somewhiles,
The other's face is full of pleasing smiles:
For never grief, nor fear of any fit
Of the least care, shall dare come near to it:
'Tis the grand jubilee, the feast of feasts,
Sabbath of sabbaths, endless rest of rests:
Which with the prophets and apostles zealous,
The constant martyrs, and our Christian fellows,
God's faithful servants, and his chosen sheep,
In heav'n we hope within short time to keep.
Du Bartas in the Seventh Day of the Week, p. 187.

a life of joy; hadst thou now but followed me close, and believingly applied thyself to that which I have spoken, and drunk in but half the comfort which those words hold forth, it would have made thee revive and leap for joy, and forget thy sorrows and diseases, and pains of the flesh: but seeing thou judgest thyself unworthy of comfort, it is just that comfort should be taken from thee.

Lord, what is the matter that this work doth go on so heavily; did I think my heart had been so backward to rejoice? If it had been to mourn and fear, and despair, it were no wonder: I have been lifting at this stone, and it will not stir; I have been pouring aqua vitæ into the mouth of the dead: I hope, Lord, by that time it comes to heaven, this heart, by thy Spirit, will be quickened and mended, or else even those joys will scarcely rejoice me.

But besides my darkness, deadness, and unbelief, I perceive there is something else that forbids my full-desired joys. This is not the time and place where so much is given: the time is our winter, and not our harvest; the place is called the valley of tears. There must be great difference betwixt the way and the end, the work and wages, the small foretastes and full fruition.

But, Lord, though thou hast reserved our joys for heaven, yet hast thou not so suspended our desires; they are most suitable and seasonable in this present life; therefore, O help me to desire till I may possess; and let me long when I cannot as I would rejoice. There is love in desire as well as in delight; and if I be not empty of love, I know I shall not long be empty of delight.

Rouse up thyself once more, then, O my soul, and try and exercise thy spiritual appetite; though thou art ignorant and unbelieving, yet art thou reasonable, and therefore must needs desire a happiness and rest: nor canst thou surely be so unreasonable as to dream of attaining it here on earth. Thou knowest, to thy sorrow, that thou art not yet at thy rest, and thy own feeling doth convince thee of thy present unhappiness; and dost thou know that thou art restless, and yet art willing to continue so; art thou neither happy in deed nor in desire; art thou neither well nor wouldst be well? When my flesh is pained and languisheth under consuming sickness, how heartily and frequently do I cry out, Oh! when shall I be eased of this pain? when shall my decaying strength be recovered? There is no dis-

sembling or formality in these desires and groans. How then should I long for my final, full recovery! There is no sickness, nor pain, nor weeping, nor complaints. O when shall I arrive at that safe and quiet harbour, where is none of these storms and waves, and dangers; when I shall never more have a weary, restless night or day! Then shall not my life be such a medley or mixture of hope and fear, of joy and sorrow, as now it is; nor shall flesh and spirit be combating within me, nor my soul be still as a pitched field, or a stage of contention, where faith and unbelief, affiance and distrust, humility and pride, do maintain a continual distracting conflict: then shall I not live a dying life for fear of dying, nor my life be made uncomfortable with the fears of losing it. O when shall I be past these soul-tormenting fears, and cares, and griefs, and passions! when shall I be out of this frail, this corruptible, ruinous body! this soul-contradicting, ensnaring, deceiving flesh! when shall I be out of this vain and vexatious world, whose pleasures are mere deluding dreams and shadows; whose miseries are real, numerous, and incessant![a] How long shall I see the church of Christ lie trodden under the feet of persecutors; or else, as a ship in the hands of foolish guides, though the supreme Master doth moderate all for the best! Alas! that I must stand by and see the church and cause of Christ, like a foot-ball in the midst of a crowd of boys, tossed about in contention from one to another; every one running and sweating with foolish violence, and labouring the downfall of all that are in his way, and all to get it into his own power, that he may

[a] False glorious pleasures; casks of happiness;
Foolish night-fires; women's and children's wishes;
Chases in arras; gilded emptiness;
Embroider'd lies; nothing between two dishes:
These are the pleasures here;

True earnest sorrows; rooted miseries;
Anguish in grain; vexations ripe and blown;
Sure-footed griefs; solid calamities;
Plain demonstrations, evident and clear,
Fetching their proof even from the very bone:
These are the sorrows here.

But, O the folly of distracted men,
Who griefs in earnest, joys in jest pursue!
Preferring like brute beasts a loathsome den
Before a court; even that above so clear;
Where are no sorrows, but delights more true
Than miseries are here.

Herbert's Poems, Dotage.

have the managing of the work himself, and may drive it before him which way he pleaseth; and when all is done, the best usage he may expect from them, is but to be spurned about in the dirt, till they have driven it on to the goal of their private interests, or deluded fancies. There is none of this disorder in the heavenly Jesusalem; there shall I find a government without imperfection, and obedience without the least unwillingness or rebellion; even a harmonious consent of perfected spirits, in obeying and praising their everlasting King. O how much better is it to be a door-keeper there and the last in that kingdom, than to be the conqueror or commander of this tumultuous world![t] There will our Lord govern all immediately by himself, and not put the reins in the hands of such ignorant readers, nor govern by such foolish and sinful deputies,[u] as the best of the sons of men now are. Dost thou so mourn for these inferior disorders, O my soul, and yet wouldst thou not be out of it! How long hast thou desired to be a member of a more perfect reformed church, and to join with more holy, humble, sincere souls, in the purest and most heavenly worship! Why, dost thou not see that on earth thy desires fly from thee? Art thou not as a child that thinketh to travel to the sun, when he seeth it rising or setting, as it were close to the earth; but as he travelleth toward it, it seems to go from him; and when he hath long wearied himself, it is as far off as ever? for the thing he seeketh is in another world. Even such hath been thy labour in seeking for so holy, so pure, so peaceable a society, as might afford thee a contented settlement here. Those that have gone as far as America for satisfaction, have confessed themselves unsatisfied still. When wars, and calamities attending them, have been over, I have said, Return now, my soul, unto thy rest: (Psal. cxvi:) but how restless a condition hath next succeeded! When God had given me the enjoyment of peace and friends, and liberty of the Gospel; and had also done even as my own heart desired; I have been ready to say, Soul, take thy ease and rest; but how quickly hath Providence called me fool, and taught me to call my state by another name! When did I ever begin to congratulate my flesh

[t] Antonius cum audiret se à vetula propter opes et dignitatem beatum prædicari; Mea matercula, inquit, si nosses quantis malis hic panniculus (viz. diadema) sit refertus, ne in sterquilinio quidem jacentem tolleres.

[u] Lætissima forma reipublicæ est, cui ad summam libertatem nihil deest, nisi pereundi licentia.—*Seneca de Clement.* lib. i. cap. 1.

[x] Read Bishop Hall's 'Soul's Farewell to Earth.'

on its felicity, but God did quickly turn my tune, and made almost the same breath to end in groaning, which did begin in laughter! I have thought ofttimes on the folly of my prosperity, Now I will have one sweet draught of solace and content, but God hath dropped in the gall, while the cup was at my mouth. We are still weary of the present condition, and desire a change, and when we have it, it doth not answer our expectation; but our discontent and restlessness is still unchanged. In time of peace we thought that war would deliver us from our disquietments, and when we saw the iron red-hot, we catched it inconsiderately, thinking that it was gold, till it burnt us to the very bone, and so stuck to our fingers, that we scarcely know yet whether we are rid of it or not. In this our misery we longed for peace; and so long were we strangers to it, that we had forgotten its name, and began to call it rest, or heaven; but as soon as we are again grown acquainted with it, we shall better bethink us, and perceive our mistake. O why am I then no more weary of this weariness! and why do I forget my resting place! (Jer. l. 6.) Up, then, O my soul, and thy most raised and fervent desires! stay not till this flesh can desire with thee; its appetite hath a lower and baser object. Thy appetite is not sensitive, but rational; distinct from its; and therefore look not that sense apprehend thy blessed object, and tell thee what and when to desire. Believing reason in the glass of Scripture may discern enough to raise the flame; and though sense apprehend not that which must draw thy desires, yet that which may drive them it doth easily apprehend. It can tell thee that thy present life is filled with distress and sorrows, though it cannot tell thee what is in the world to come. Thou needest not Scripture to tell thee, no faith to discern that thy head acheth, and thy stomach is sick, thy bowels griped, and thy heart grieved, and some of these, or such-like, are thy daily case. Thy friends about thee are grieved to see thy griefs, and to hear thy dolorous groans and lamentations, and yet art thou loth to leave this woful life! Is this a state to be preferred before the celestial glory; or is it better to be thus miserable from Christ, than to be happy with him;[r] or canst

[r] The things of this world do nothing delight me, nor any temporal kingdom. It is better for me to die in Jesus Christ than to reign in the ends of the earth. For I desire after the Lord, the Son of the true God, and the Father of Jesus Christ. Him I seek, and him that died and rose for us. Spare me, brethren, hinder me not from life, for Jesus is the Life of the faithful; do not wish me to die, for life without Christ is death. Being resolved to be

thou possibly be so unbelieving, as to doubt whether that life be any better than this! O my soul, doth not the dulness of thy desires after rest, accuse thee of most detestable ingratitude and folly? Must thy Lord procure thee a rest at so dear a rate, and dost thou no more value it! Must he purchase thy rest by a life of labour and sorrow, and by the pangs of a bitter, cursed death! And when all is done, hadst thou rather be here without it! Must he go before to prepare so blessed a mansion for such a wretch, and art thou now loth to go to possess it! Must his blood, and care, and pains be lost! O unthankful, unworthy soul! Shall the Lord of glory be willing of thy company, and art thou unwilling of his? Are they fit to dwell with God, that had rather stay from him? Must he crown thee, and glorify thee against thy will; or must he yet deal more roughly with thy darling flesh, and leave thee never a corner in thy ruinous cottage for to cover thee, but fire thee out of all, before thou wilt away? Must every sense be an inlet to thy sorrows; and every friend become the scourge, and Job's messengers be the daily intelligencers, and bring thee the currantos of thy multiplied calamities, before that heaven will seem more desirable than this earth? Must every joint be the seat of pain; and every member deny thee a room to rest in, and thy groans be indited from the very heart and bones, before thou wilt be willing to leave this flesh? Must thy heavy burdens be bound upon thy back; and thy sointolerable paroxysms become incessant; and thy intermittent aguish woes be turned into continual burning fevers; yea, must earth become a very hell to thee, before thou wilt be willing to be with God? O impudent soul, if thou be not ashamed of this! What is loathing, if this be love? Look about thee, O my soul; behold the most lovely creature, or the most desirable state, and tell me where wouldst thou be if not with God! Poverty is a burden, and riches a snare. Sickness is little pleasing to thee, and usually health as little safe; the one is full of sorrow, and the other of sin. The frowning world doth bruise thy heel, and the smiling world doth sting thee to the heart. When it seemeth ugly, it causeth loathing; when beauteous, it is thy bane. When thy condition is bitter, thou wouldst fain spit it out, and when

God's, I may not please the world. Suffer me to behold the pure light, When I come thither, I shall be a man of God. Let me alone, that I may be an imitator of the sufferings of my God. He that would have him in himself, let him know what I would have, and suffer with me, as knowing what is in me, saith Ignatius in Epist. ad Roman. edit. Usserii, p. 87.

delightful, it is but sugared misery and deceit; the sweetest poison doth often bring the surest death. So much as the world is loved and delighted in, so much it hurteth and endangereth the lover;[x] and if it may not be loved, why should it be desired? If thou be applauded, it proves the most contagious breath; and how ready are the sails of pride to receive such winds: so that it frequently addeth to thy sin, but not one cubit to the stature of thy worth; and if thou be vilified, slandered, or unkindly used, methinks this should not entice thy love. Never didst thou sit by the fire of prosperity and applause, but thou hadst with it the smoke that drew water from thy eyes; never hadst thou the rose without the pricks: and the sweetness hath been expired, and the beauty faded, before the fears which thou hadst in gathering it were healed. Is it not as good to be without the honey, as to have it with so many smarting stings? The highest delight thou hast found in anything below, hath been in thy successful labours and thy godly friends; and have these indeed been so sweet, as that thou shouldst be so loth to leave them? If they seem better to thee than a life with God, it is time for God to take them from thee. Thy studies have been sweet, and have they not been also bitter? My mind hath been pleased, but my body pained, and the weariness of the flesh hath quickly abated the pleasures of the spirit. When by painful studies I have not discovered the truth, it hath been but a tedious way to a grievous end; discontent and trouble purchased by toilsome, wearying labours. And if I have found out the truth by divine assistance, I have found but an exposed, naked orphan, that hath cost me much to take in, and clothe, and keep, which, though of noble birth, yea, a divine offspring, and amiable in mine eyes, and worthy I confess of better entertainment, yet, from men that know not its descent, hath drawn upon me their envy and furious opposition; and hath brought the blinded Sodomites, with whom I lived at some peace before, to

[x] Quibus argenti et auri maximum pondus et pecuniarum ingentium vel extructi aggeres, vel defossæ strues: hos etiam inter divitias suas trepidos cogitionis incertæ solicitudo discruciat, ne prædo vastet, ne percussor infestet, ne inimica cujusque locupletioris invidia calumniosis litibus inquietet. Non cibus securo somnusve contingit; suspirat ille in convivio, bibat licet gemmas: et cum epulis marcidum corpus torus mollior alto sinu condiderit, vigilat in pluma. Nec intelligit miser sibi speciosa esse supplicia: auro se alligatum teneri, et possideri magis quam possidere divitias atque opes. O detestabilis cæcitas mentium! Et cupiditatis insanæ profunda caligo! Cum exonerare se posset, et levare ponderibus, pergit magis fortunis augentibus incubare, pergit pœnalibus cumulis pertinaciter adhærere!—*Cyprian. ad Donat.* epist. 1. p. 5.

crowd about me,[a] and assault my doors, that I might prostitute my heavenly guests to their pleasure, and again expose them, whom I had so gladly and lately entertained; yea, the very tribes of Israel have been gathered against me, thinking that the altar which I built for the interest of truth,[b] and unity, and peace, had been erected to the introduction of error and idolatry; and so the increase of knowledge hath been the increase of sorrow. My heart, indeed, is ravished with the beauty of naked truth, and I am ready to cry out 'I have found it,' or, as Aquinas, '*Conclusum est contra,*' &c.; but when I have found it, I know not what to do with it. If I confine it to my own breast, and keep it secret to myself, it is as a consuming fire, shut up in my heart and bones. I am as the lepers without Samaria, or as those that were forbidden to tell any man of the works of Christ: I am weary of forbearing, I cannot stay. If I reveal it to the world,[c] I can expect but an unwelcome entertainment, and an ungrateful return; for they have taken up their standing in religious knowledge already, as if they were at Hercules' pillars, and had no further to go, nor any more learn. They dare be no wiser than they are already, nor receive any more of truth than they have already received, lest thereby they should accuse their ancestors and teachers of ignorance and imperfection, and themselves should seem to be mutable and inconstant, and to hold their opinions in religion with reserves.[d] The most precious truth not apprehended, doth seem to be

[a] Memini quid Bucholcerus de Melancthone convitiis lacerato dicere solebat; Quidam sunt anathema secundum dici, quidam secundum esse: mallem ego cum Philippo anathema secundum dici, quam cum illo secundum esse. Josh. xxii.; Eccles. i. 18; Jer. xx. 9.

[b] Nostram opinionem cum dico, non alligo me ad unum aliquem è proceribus. Est et mihi censendi jus. Itaque aliquem sequar: aliquem jubebo sententiam dividere. Fortasse, et post omnes citatus, nihil improbabo ex his quæ priores decreverint; et dicam, Hoc amplius sentio.—*Seneca de Vita Beata*, cap. 3.

[c] Nihil modo quietis aut securitatis invenire possumus, dum adhuc in nobis ipsis ingemiscimus gravati, adoptionem expectantes: cum autem mortale hoc induerit immortalitatem, tunc nulla erit diabolicæ fraudis impugnatio, nullum hæreticæ pravitatis dogma, nulla infidelis populi impietatis: omnibus ita pacatis et compositis, ut in tabernaculis justorum sola audiatur vox exultationis et salutis.—*Greg. in 7 Psal. Pœn.*

[d] Docibilis ille est, qui est ad discendi patientiam lenis et mitis. Oportet enim episcopum non tantum docere, sed et discere. Quia et ille melius docet, qui quotidie crescit et proficit discendo meliora. I would God would humble ministers to learn this excellent lesson. It is in Cyprian's Epist. 74, 'Ad Pomp.,' that famous destructory of the Roman usurpation, and of unwritten traditions.

error and fantastic novelty: every man that readeth what I write, will not be at the pains of those tedious studies to find out the truth as I have been, but think it should meet their eyes in the very reading. If the mere writing of truth, with its clearest evidence, were all that were necessary to the apprehension of it by others, then the lowest scholar in the school might be quickly as good as the highest. So that if I did see more than others, to reveal it to the lazy, prejudiced world, would but make my friends turn enemies, or look upon me with a strange and jealous eye: and yet truth is so dear a friend itself, and he that sent it much more dear, that whatsoever I suffer I dare not stifle or conceal it. O what then are these bitter sweet studies and discoveries to the everlasting views of the face of the God of truth! The light that here I have is but a knowing in part, and yet it costeth me so dear, that in a temptation I am almost ready to prefer the quiet, silent night before such a rough tempestuous day.[e] But there I shall have light and rest together, and the quietness of the night without its darkness. I can never now have the lightning without the thunder, which maketh it seem more dreadful than delightful. And shouldst thou be loth, then, O my soul, to leave this for the eternal perfect light; and to change thy candle for the glorious sun; and to change thy studies, and preaching, and praying, for the harmonious praises and fruition of the blessed God.

Nor will thy loss be greater in the change of thy company than of thine employment. Thy friends here have been indeed thy delight;[f] and have they not been also thy vexation and thy grief? They are gracious, and are they not also sinful; they are kind and loving, and are they not also peevish, froward, and soon displeased? They are humble, but withal, alas! how proud! They will scarce endure to hear plainly of their disgraceful faults; they cannot bear undervaluing or disrespect; they itch after the good thoughts and applause of others; they love those best that highliest esteem them. The missing of courtesy; a supposed slighting or disrespect; the contradicting of their words or humours; a difference in opinion, yea, the turn-

[e] Et ego indignor, quia non novi justitiam Dei? Si homo sum, non indignor. Excedam hominem si possum, et fortè attingam; sed etsi attigero, homini non dicam: excedat et ipse, et attingat mecum.—*August. de Verb. Apostol.* serm. 20. cap. 3. Nullus enim suavior animo cibus est, quam cognitio veritatis, ut Lanctantius Institut. lib. i. cap. 1.

[f] Amabile est præesse civibus, sed placere difficile. Multum enim et inter cognatos, semper dura constantia est.—*Symmach. Theod.* lib. x. epist. 16.

ing of a straw, will quickly show thee the pride and the uncertainty of thy friend. Their graces are sweet to thee, and their gifts are helpful, but are not their corruptions bitter, and their imperfections hurtful? Though at a distance they seem to thee most holy and innocent, yet when they come nearer thee, and thou hast thoroughly tried them, alas! what silly, frail, and froward pieces are the best of men![g] Then the knowledge which thou didst admire, appeareth cloudeth with ignorance, and the virtues that so shined as a glow-worm in the night, are scarcely to be found when thou seekest them by daylight. When temptations are strong, how quickly do they yield! what wounds have they given to religion by their shameful falls! Those that have been famous for their holiness, have been as infamous for their notorious, heinous wickedness; those that have been thy dearest bosom friends, that have prayed and conferred with thee, and helped thee toward heaven, and by their fervour, forwardness, and heavenly lives, have shamed thy coldness, and earthliness, and dulness; whom thou hast singled out as the choicest from a world of professors, whom thou madest the daily companions and delights of thy life, are not some of them fallen to drunkenness, and some to whoredom, some to pride, perfidiousness, and rebellion, and some to the most damnable heresies and divisions?[h] And hath thy very heart received such wounds from thy friends, and yet art thou so loth to go from them to thy God? Thy friends that are weak, are little useful or comfortable to thee; and those that are strong, are the abler to hurt thee; and the best, if not heedfully used, will prove the worst. The better and keener the knife is, the sooner and deeper will it cut thy fingers, if thou take not heed. Yea, the very number of thy friends is a burden and trouble to thee. Every one supposeth he hath some interest in thee; yea, the

[g] Vetus dictum est, A lasso iram quæri æque et ab esuriente et sitiente, et ab omni homine quem aliqua res urit. Nam ut ulcera ad levem tactum, deinde etiam ad suspicionem tactus condolescunt; ita animus affectus minimis offenditur, adeo ut quosdam salutatio, epistola, oratio, et interrogatio, ad litem evocent: nunquam sine querela ægra tanguntur. (How true have I proved this, when I have dealt plainly and faithfully with the most seemingly humbled!)—*Seneca de Ira*, lib. iii. cap. 10. p. (mihi) 443.

[h] Offendet te superbus contemptu, dives contumelia, petulans injuria, lividus malignitate, pugnax contentione, ventosus et mendax vanitate. Non feres à suspicioso timeri; à pertinace vinci; à delicato fastidiri. Elige simplices, faciles, moderatos, qui iram tuam non evocent, sed ferant. Magis adhuc proderunt submissi, et humani, et dulces; non tamen usque in adulationem.—*Seneca de Ira*, lib. iii. cap. 8. p. 438.

interest of a friend, which is not little; and how insufficient art thou to satisfy all their expectations, when it is much if thou canst answer the expectations of one! If thou wert divided among so many, as each could have but little of thee, so thyself and God, who should have most, will have none. And almost every one that hath not more of thee than thou canst spare for all, is ready to censure thee as unfriendly, and a neglecter of the duty or respects which thou owest them;[1] and shouldst thou please them all, the gain will not be great, nor art thou sure that they will again please thee.

Awake then, O my drowsy soul, and look above this world of sorrow. Hast thou borne the yoke of thy afflictions from thy youth, and so long felt the smarting rod, and yet canst no better understand its meaning? Is not every stroke to drive thee hence; and is not the voice of the rod like that to Elijah, What doest thou here? Up and away. Dost thou forget that sure prediction of thy Lord, "In the world ye shall have trouble, but in me ye shall have peace." The first thou hast found true by long experience, and of the latter thou hast had a small foretaste, but the perfect peace is yet before, which, till it be enjoyed, cannot be clearly understood.

Ah! my dear Lord, I feel thy meaning. It is written in my flesh: it is engraven in my bones. My heart thou aimest at; thy rod doth drive, thy silken cord of love doth draw, and all to bring it to thyself. And is that all, Lord? is that the worst? Can such a heart be worth thy having? Make it so, Lord, and then it is thine; take it to thyself, and then take me. I can but reach it toward thee, and not unto thee. I am too low, and it is too dull. This clod hath life to stir, but not to rise; legs it hath, but wings it wanteth. As the feeble child to the tender mother; it looketh up to thee, and stretcheth out the hands, and fain would have thee take it up. Though I cannot so freely say, My heart is with thee, my soul longeth after thee; yet can I say, I long for such a longing heart. The twins are yet a striving in my bowels: the spirit is willing, the flesh is weak; the spirit longs, the flesh is loth. The flesh is unwilling to lie rotting in the earth; the soul desires to be with thee. My spirit crieth, Let thy kingdom

[1] Ingratitudinem cave tanquam maximum crimen; ne admittas: ignosce tanquam levissimo, si admissum est. Hæc est enim injuria summa; beneficium perdidisti? Salvum est tibi ex illo quod est optimum, dedisti.—*Seneca de Benefic.* lib. i. cap. 10. p. 386.

come; or else, let me come unto thy kingdom: but the flesh is afraid lest thou shouldst hear my prayer, and take me at my word. What frequent contradictions dost thou find in my requests! because there is such contradiction in myself. My prayers plead against my prayers, and one part begs a denial to the other. No wonder if thou give me such a dying life, when I know not whether to ask for life or death. With the same breath do I beg for a reprieval and removal; and the same groan doth utter my desires and my fears. My soul would go, my flesh would stay. My soul would fain be out, my flesh would have thee hold the door. O, blessed be the grace that makes advantages of my corruptions, even to contradict and kill themselves. For I fear my fears, and sorrow for my sorrows, and groan under my fleshly groans: I loathe my lothness, and I long for greater longings. And while my soul is thus tormented with fears and cares, and with the tedious means for attaining my desires; it addeth so much to the burden of my troubles, that my weariness thereby is much increased, which makes me groan to be at rest. Indeed, Lord, my soul itself also is in a strait, and what to choose I know not well, but yet thou knowest what to give: to depart, and be with thee, is best; but yet to be in the flesh seems needful. Thou knowest I am not weary of thy work, but of sorrow and sin I must needs be weary: I am willing to stay while thou wilt here employ me, and to dispatch the work which thou hast put into my hands, till these strange thoughts of thee be somewhat more familiar, and thou hast raised me into some degree of acquaintance with thyself: but I beseech thee, stay no longer when this is done. Stay not till sin shall get advantage, and my soul grow earthly by dwelling on this earth, and my desires and delights in thee grow dead: but while I must be here, let me be still amending and ascending; make me still better, and take me at the best. I dare not be so impatient of living, as to importune thee to cut off my time, and urge thee to snatch me hence unready; because I know my everlasting state doth so much depend on the improvement of this life. Nor yet would I stay when my work is done; and remain here sinning, when my brethren are triumphing. I am drowning in tears, while they swim in joys; I am weeping, while they are singing; I am under thy feet, while they are in thy bosom: thy footsteps bruise and break this worm, while those stars do shine in the firmament of glory. Thy frowns do kill me, while they are quickened by thy smiles;

they are ever living, and I am daily dying: their joys are raised by the knowledge of their endlessness; my griefs are enlarged by still expecting more: while they possess but one continued pleasure, I bear the successive assaults of fresh calamities. One billow falls in the neck of another; and when I am rising up from under one, another comes and strikes me down. Yet I am thy child, as well as they; Christ is my head, as well as theirs: why is there then so great a distance? How differently dost thou use us, when thou art Father to us all! They sit at thy table, while I must stand without the doors. But I acknowledge the equity of thy ways. Though we are all children, yet I am the prodigal, and therefore meeter in this remote country to feed on husks; while they are always with thee, and possess thy glory. Though we are all members, yet not the same; they are the tongue, and fitter to praise thee; they are the hands, and fitter for thy service; I am the feet, and therefore meeter to tread on earth, and move in dirt; but unfit to stand so near the head as they. They were once themselves in my condition, and I shall shortly be in theirs: they were of the lowest form, before they came to the highest; they suffered, before they reigned: they came out of great tribulation, who now are standing before thy throne: and shall not I be content to come to the crown as they did; and to drink of their cup, before I sit with them in the kingdom? The blessed souls of David, Paul, Austin, Calvin, &c. with all the spirits of the just made perfect, were once on earth, as I am now; as far from the sight of thy face and glory, as deep in sorrows, as weak, and sick, and full of pains, as I. Their souls were longer imprisoned in corruptible flesh: I shall go but the way that they did all go before me: their house of clay did fall to dust, and so must mine. The world they are now in, was as strange to them before they were there as it is to me.[k] And am I better than all these precious souls? I am contented, therefore, O my Lord, to stay thy time, and go thy way; so thou wilt exalt me also in thy season, and take me into thy barn when thou seest me ripe. In the mean time I may desire, though I am not to repine; I may look over

[k] It befalls us bigger children as you see it oft befalls our children's; those whom they love, and are accustomed to, and play with, yet they are afraid of if they see them disguised. We must remove the vizard, not from persons only, but also from things, that we may see them barefaced. Tell me not of swords and fire, and a company of tormentors raging about thee. Take away the vizard of that pomp which covers it and frighteth fools, and all is but death; which my servant lately despised.—*Seneca ad Luc.* epist. 21. p. 560.

the hedge, though I may not break over; I may believe and wish, though not make any sinful haste; I am content to wait, but not to lose thee. And when thou seest me too contented with thine absence, and satisfying and pleasing myself here below, O quicken up then my dull desires, and blow up the dying spark of love; and leave me not till I am able unfeignedly to cry out, As the hart panteth after the brooks, and the dry land thirsteth for the water-streams, so thirsteth my soul after thee, O God: when shall I come and appear before the living God? (Psal. xlii. 1, 2:) "till my daily conversation be with thee in heaven, and from thence I may longingly expect my Saviour:" (Phil. iii. 19—21:) till my affections are set on things above, where Christ is reigning, and my life is hid: (2 Cor. v. 1—8:) "till I can walk by faith, and not by sight; willing rather to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord." (Col. iii. 1—4.) What interest hath this empty world in me? and what is there in it that may seem so lovely, as to entice my desires and delight from thee, or make me loth to come away? When I look about me with a deliberate, undeceived eye, methinks this world is a howling wilderness, and most of the inhabitants are untamed hideous monsters. All its beauty I can wink into blackness, and all its mirth I can think into sadness; I can drown all its pleasures in a few penitent tears, and the wind of a sigh will scatter them away.[1] When I look on them without the spectacles of flesh, I call them nothing, as being vanity, or worse than nothing, as vexation. O let not this flesh so seduce my soul, as to make it prefer this weary life before the joys that are about thy throne: and though death of itself be unwelcome to nature, yet let thy grace make thy glory appear to me so desirable, that the king of terrors may be the messenger of my joy. O let not my soul be ejected by violence, and dispossessed of its habitation against its will, but draw it forth to thyself by the secret power of thy love, as the sunshine in the spring draws forth the creatures from their winter cells;[m] meet it

[1] Not that we may not here
Taste of the cheer;
But as birds drink, and then lift up the head,
So must we sip, and think
Of better drink
We may attain to after we are dead.
Herbert in Temple.

[m] Nihil est stultius, nihil indignius, quam ad præmia cœlestia, non obsequio voluntatis accurrere, sed necessitatis vinculo invitum trahi.—*Gomarus in Oratione Funebri pro Junio.*

half way, and entice it to thee, as the loadstone doth the iron, and as the greater flame doth attract the less; dispel therefore the clouds that hide from me thy love, or remove the scales that hinder mine eyes from beholding thee: for only the beams that stream from thy face, and the foresight or taste of thy great salvation, can make a soul unfeignedly to say, Now let thy servant depart in peace;[n] reading and hearing will not serve. My meat is not sweet to my ear or my eye; it must be a taste or feeling that must entice away my soul: though arguing is the means to bend my will, yet if thou bring not the matter to my hand, and by the influence of thy Spirit make it not effectual, I shall never reason my soul to be willing to depart. In the winter, when it is cold and dirty without, I am loth to leave my chamber and fire; but in the summer, when all is warm and green, I am loth to be so confined; show me but the summer fruits and pleasures of thy paradise, and I shall freely quit my earthly cell. Some pleasure I have in my books, my friends, and in thine ordinances: till thou hast given me a taste of something more sweet, my soul will be loth to part with these: the traveller will hold his cloak the faster when the winds do bluster, and the storms assault him; but when the sun shines hot, he will cast it off as a burden; so will my soul, when thou frownest, or art strange, be lother to leave this garment of flesh; but thy smiles would make me leave it as my prison. But it is not thy ordinary discoveries that will here suffice; as the work is greater, so must be thy help. O turn these fears into strong desires, and this lothness to die into longings after thee![o] While I must be absent from thee, let my soul as heartily groan under thine absence, as my pained body doth under its want of health: and let not those groans be counterfeit, or constrained, but let them come from a longing, loving heart, unfeignedly judging it best to depart, and be with Christ: and if I have any more time to spend on earth, let me live as without the world in thee, as I have sometime lived as without thee in the world. O suffer me not to spend in strangeness to thee another day of this my pilgrimage! While I have a thought to think, let me not forget thee; while I have a tongue to move, let me mention thee with

[n] Accipe, quod sentitur antequam discitur, nec per moras temporum longa agnitione colligitur; sed compendio gratiæ maturantis hauritur, ut Cyprian. ad Donat. epist 1. p. 1.

[o] Mortalitas ista, ut Judæis, Gentilibus, et Christi hostibus pestis est; ita Dei servis salutaris excessus est.—*Junius Moriens.*

delight; while I have a breath to breathe, let it be after thee, and for thee; while I have a knee to bend, let it bow daily at thy footstool; and when by sickness thou confinest me to my couch, do thou make my bed, and number my pains, and put all my tears into thy bottle. And as when my spirit groaned for my sins, the flesh would not second it, but desired that which my spirit did abhor; so now, when my flesh doth groan under its pains, let not my spirit second it, but suffer the flesh to groan alone, and let me desire that day which my flesh abhorreth, that my friends may not with so much sorrow wait for the departure of my soul, as my soul with joy shall wait for its own departure; and then let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be as his, even a removal to that glory that shall never end. Send forth thy convoy of angels for my departing soul, and let them bring it among the perfect spirits of the just, and let me follow my dear friends that have died in Christ before; and when my friends are weeping over my grave, let my spirit be reposed with thee in rest, and when my corpse shall lie there rotting in the dark, let my soul be in the inheritance of the saints in light. And O thou that numberest the very hairs of my head, do thou number all the days that my body lies in the dust: and thou that writest all my members in thy book, do thou keep an account of all my scattered bones. And hasten, O my Saviour, the time of thy return; send forth thine angels, and let that dreadful, joyful trumpet sound: delay not, lest the living give up their hopes: delay not, lest earth should grow like hell, and lest thy church by division be crumbled all to dust, and dissolved by being resolved into individual units: delay not, lest thine enemies get advantage of thy flock, and lest pride, and hypocrisy, and sensuality, and unbelief, should prevail against thy little remnant, and share among them thy whole inheritance, and when thou comest thou find not faith on the earth: delay not, lest the grave should boast of victory; and having learned rebellion of its guest, should plead prescription, and refuse to deliver thee up thy due. O hasten that great resurrection-day! when thy command shall go forth, and none shall disobey; when the sea and earth shall yield up their hostages, and all that sleep in the grave shall awake, and the dead in Christ shall first arise; when the seed that thou sowest corruptible, shall come forth incorruptible; and graves that received but rottenness, and retained but dust, shall return thee glorious stars and suns: therefore dare I lay down my carcass in the dust, entrusting it, not to a

grave but to thee, and therefore my flesh shall rest in hope, till thou raise it to the possession of the everlasting rest. Return, O Lord; how long? O let thy kingdom come! Thy desolate bride saith, Come; for thy Spirit within her saith, Come, who teacheth her thus to pray with groanings after thee which cannot be expressed: the whole creation saith, Come, waiting to be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God: thyself hath said, Surely I come; Amen. Even so come, Lord Jesus.

THE CONCLUSION.

THUS, reader, I have given thee my best advice for the attaining and maintaining a heavenly conversation. The manner is imperfect, and too much mine own, but, for the main matter, I dare say I received it from God. From him I deliver it to thee, and his charge I lay upon thee that thou entertain and practise it. If thou canst not do it methodically and fully, yet do it as thou canst; only, be sure thou do it seriously and frequently. If thou wilt believe a man that hath made some small trial of it, thou shalt find it will make thee another man, and elevate thy soul, and clear thine understanding, and polish thy conversation, and leave a pleasant savour upon thy heart; so that thy own experience will make thee confess that one hour thus spent will more effectually revive thee than many in bare external duties; and a day in these contemplations will afford thee truer content than all the glory and riches of the earth.[a] Be acquainted with this work, and thou wilt be, in some remote sort, acquainted with God. Thy joys will be spiritual, and prevalent, and lasting, according to the nature of their blessed object; thou wilt have comfort in life, and comfort in death. When thou hast neither wealth nor health nor the pleasures of this world, yet wilt thou have comfort. Comfort, without the presence or help of any friend, without a minister, without a book; when all means are denied thee, or taken from thee, yet mayest thou have vigorous, real comfort. Thy graces will be mighty, and active, and victorious, and the daily joy which is thus fetched from heaven, will be thy strength. Thou wilt be as one that standeth on the top of an exceeding high mountain; he looks down upon the world as if it were quite below him.[b] How small do the fields, and woods, and

[a] Ecce ut sine exemplo est in hominibus perfecta justitia: et tamen impossibilis non est. Fieret enim si tanta voluntas adhiberetur, quanta sufficit tantæ rei. Esset autem tanta, si et nihil eorum quæ pertinent ad justitiam nos lateret. Et ea sic delectarent animum, ut quicquid aliud voluptas, sive dolor impedit, delectatio illa superaret.—*Aug. de Spir. et Lit.* cap. 34, 35.

[b] Suppose thyself awhile taken up into the high top of a steep mountain, and thence behold the face of all things that are done below thee; and being there, free thyself from the blusterings of the raging world, dost cast thine

countries, seem to him? cities and towns seem but little spots. Thus despicably wilt thou look on all things here below. The greatest princes will seem below thee but as grasshoppers, and the busy, contentious, covetous world, but as a heap of ants. Men's threatenings will be no terror to thee, nor the honours of this world any strong enticement. Temptations will be more harmless, as having lost their strength, and afflictions less grievous, as having lost their sting; and every mercy will be better known and relished.

Reader, it is under God in thine own choice now, whether thou wilt live this blessed life or not, and whether all this pains which I have taken for thee, shall prosper or be lost. If it be lost through thy laziness, which God forbid, be it known to thee thou wilt prove the greatest loser thyself. If thou value not this heavenly, angelical life, how canst thou say that thou valuest heaven? And if thou value it not, no wonder if thou be shut out. The power of godliness lieth in the actings of the soul; take heed that thou stick not in the vain, deluding form. O man, what hast thou to mind but God and heaven! Art thou not almost out of this world already? Dost thou not look every day, when one disease or other will let out thy soul? Doth not the bier stand ready to carry thee to the grave; and the worms wait to feed upon thy face and heart? What, if thy pulse must beat a few strokes more; and what, if thou have a few more breaths to fetch before thou breathe out thy last; and what, if thou have a few more nights to sleep before thou sleep in the dust? Alas! what will this be when it is gone; and is it not almost gone already? Verily, shortly thou wilt see thy glass run out, and say to thyself, 'My life is done; my time is gone; it is past recalling; there is nothing now but heaven or hell before me. Oh, where then should thy heart be now but in heaven!' Didst thou but know what a dreadful thing it is to have a strange and doubtful thought of heaven when a man lies a dying, it would surely rouse thee up. And what other thoughts, but strange, can

eyes all abroad; thou wouldst then pity the world, and remember thyself, and be more thankful to God, and exceeding glad that thou hast escaped it. Behold thence the highways stopped with robbers, the seas beset with pirates, and wars all abroad in horrid bloodshed of armies. The world drenched in the blood of one another; and murder, which is a crime when single men commit it, is called valour, or a virtue, when it is publicly performed. They escape the punishment of their wickedness, not by innocency, but by the greatness and might of their cruelty.—*Cyprian. ad Donat.* epist. 1. Lege ultra.

that man have, that never thought seriously of heaven till then? Every man's first thoughts are strange about all things; familiarity and acquaintance comes not in a moment, but is the consequent of custom, and frequent converse: and strangeness naturally raiseth dread, as familiarity doth delight. What else makes a fish or a wild beast flee from a man, when domestic creatures take pleasure in his company? So wilt thou flee from God, if thou knowest how, who should be thy only happiness, if thou do not get this strangeness removed in thy lifetime. And is it not pity that a child should be so strange to his own father, as to fear nothing more than to go into his presence; and to think himself best when he is furthest from him; and to flee from his face as a wild creature will do from the face of a man? Alas! how little do many godly ones differ from the world, either in their comforts or willingness to die! and all because they live so strange to the place and fountain of their comforts. Besides a little verbal or other outside duties, or talking of controversies and doctrines of religion, or forbearing the practice of many sins, how little do the most of the religious differ from other men, when God hath prepared so vast a difference hereafter! If a word of heaven fall in now and then in their conference, alas! how slightly is it, and customary, and heartless! And if their prayers or preaching have heavenly expressions, they usually are fetched from their mere invention, or memory, or books, and not from the experience or feeling of their hearts. O what a life might men live if they were but willing and diligent! God would have our joys to be far more than our sorrows, yea, he would have us to have no sorrow but what tendeth to joy, and no more than our sins have made necessary for our good. How much do those Christians wrong God and themselves, that either make their thoughts of God the inlet of their sorrows, or let these offered joys lie by, as neglected or forgotten! Some there be that say it is not worth so much time and trouble, to think of the greatness of the joys above; so we can make sure they are ours, we know they are great. But as these men obey not the command of God, which requireth them to have their conversation in heaven, and to set their affections on things above, so do they wilfully make their own lives miserable, by refusing the delights that God hath set before them. And yet, if this were all, it were a smaller matter; if it were but loss of their comforts, I would not say so much, but see what

abundance of other mischiefs do follow the absence of these heavenly delights.

First, It will damp, if not destroy, our very love to God:[c] so deeply as we apprehend his bounty and exceeding love to us, and his purpose to make us eternally happy, so much will it raise our love: love to God, and delight in him, are still conjunct. They that conceive of God as one that desireth their blood and damnation, cannot heartily love him.

Secondly, It will make us have seldom and unpleasing thoughts of God, for our thoughts will follow our love and delight. Did we more delight in God than in any thing below, our thoughts would as freely run after him, as now they run from him.

Thirdly, And it will make men to have as seldom and unpleasing speech of God; for who will care for talking of that which he hath no delight in? What makes men still talking of worldliness, or wickedness, but that these are more pleasant to them than God?

Fourthly, It will make men have no delight in the service of God, when they have no delight in God, nor any sweet thoughts of heaven, which is the end of their services.[d] No wonder if such Christians complain that they are still backward to duty; that they have no delight in prayer, in sacraments, or in Scripture itself. If thou couldst once delight in God, thou wouldst easily delight in duty, especially that which bringeth thee into the nearest converse with him. But, till then, no wonder if thou be weary of all, further than some external excellency may give thee a carnal delight. Doth not this cause many Christians to go on so heavily in secret duties? Like the ox in the furrow, that will go no longer than he is driven, and is glad when he is unyoked.

Fifthly, Yea, it much endangereth the perverting of men's judgments, concerning the ways of God, and means of grace,

[c] Quis nesciat, non esse in hominis potestate quid sciat? Nec esse consequens, ut quod appetendum cognitum fuerit, appetatur; nisi tantum delectet, quantum diligendum est. Hoc autem sanitas est animæ.—*August. de Spir. et Lit.* cap. 34, 35.

[d] Tunc bonum concupisci incipit cum dulcescere cœperit: quando autem timore pœnæ, non amore justitiæ fit bonum, nondum bene fit bonum: nec fit in corde, quod fieri videtur in opere, quando mallet homo non facere, si posset impune. Ergo benedictio dulcedinis est gratia Dei, qua fit in nobis, ut nos delectet, et cupiamus hoc est, amemus, quod præcipit nobis.—*August. ad Bonif.* lib. ii.

when they have no delight in God and heaven. Though it be said, "perit omne judicium cum res transit in affectum," "that judgment perisheth when things pass into affection;" yet, that is but when affection leadeth the judgment, and not when it followeth. Affection holdeth its object faster than bare judgment doth. The soul will not much care for that truth which is not accompanied with suitable goodness; and it will more easily be drawn to believe that to be false which it doth not delightfully apprehend to be good; which doubtless is no small cause of the ungodly's prejudice against the ways of God, and of many formal men's dislike of extemporate prayers, and of a strict observation of the Lord's-day. Had they a true delight in God and heavenly things, it would rectify their judgments better than all the arguments in the world. Lose this delight once, and you will begin to quarrel with the ordinances and ways of God, and to be more offended at the preacher's imperfections than profited by the doctrine.

Sixthly, And it is the want of these heavenly delights in God that makes men so entertain the delights of the flesh.[e] This is the cause of most men's voluptuousness and flesh-pleasing. The soul will not rest without some kind of delights. If it had nothing to delight in, either in hand or in hope, it would be in a kind of hell on earth, vexing itself with continual sorrow and despair. If a dog have lost his master, he will follow somebody else. Men must have their sweet cups, or delicious fare, or gay apparel, or cards, or dice, or fleshly lusts, to make up their want of delight in God. How well these will serve instead of God, our wanton youths will be better able to tell me, when we meet at judgment. If men were acquainted with this heavenly life, there would need no laws against sabbath-breaking and riotousness; nor would men need to go for mirth to an alehouse or a tavern: they would have a far sweeter pastime and recreation nearer hand.

Seventhly, also, This want of heavenly delights will leave men under the power of every affliction; they will have nothing to comfort them, and ease them in their sufferings, but the empty,

[e] Ab hac necessitate servitutis ille liberat, qui non solum dat præcepta per legem, verum etiam donat per spiritum charitatem, cujus delectatione vincatur delectatio peccati: alioquin perseverat invicta, et servum suum tentat. —*August. Oper. Imperf.* lib. i. cap. 109. Et fide justus vivit: justeque vivit in quantum non cedit malæ concupiscentiæ, vincente delectatione justitiæ.—*Aug. Enchir.* cap. 118.

ineffectual pleasure of the flesh; and when that is gone, where then is their delight?

Eighthly, Also it will make men fearful, and unwilling to die: for who would go to a God or a place that he hath no delight in? or who would leave his pleasure here, except it were to go to a better? Oh, if the people of God would learn once this heavenly life, and take up their delight in God whilst they live, they would not tremble and be disconsolate at the tidings of death.

Ninthly, Yea, this want of heavenly delight doth lay men open to the power of every temptation. A little thing will tice a man from that which he hath no pleasure in.

Tenthly, Yea, it is a dangerous preparative to total apostacy. A man will hardly long hold on in a way that he hath no delight in, nor use the means, if he have no delight in the end; but as a beast, if you drive him in a way that he would not go, will be turning out at every gap. If you be religious in your actions, and be come over to God in your outward conversation, and not in your delight, you will shortly be gone if your trial be strong. How many young people have we known, who by good education, or the persuasion of friends, or for fear of hell, have been awhile kept up among prayers, and sermons, and good company, as a bird in a cage, when, if they durst, they had rather have been in an alehouse, or at their sports, and at last they have broken loose, when their restraint was taken off, and have forsaken the way that they never took pleasure in? You see then, that it is not a matter of indifferency, whether you entertain these heavenly delights or not; nor is the loss of your present comfort all the inconvenience that follows the neglect.

And now, Christian friends, I have here lined you out a heavenly, precious work: would you but do it, it would make you mend indeed. To delight in God is the work of angels, and the contrary is the work of devils. If God would persuade you now to make conscience of this duty, and help you in it by the blessed influence of his Spirit, you would not change your lives with the greatest prince on earth. But I am afraid, if I may judge of your hearts by the backwardness of my own, that it will prove a hard thing to persuade you to the work, and that much of this my labour will be lost. Pardon my jealousy; it is raised upon too many and sad experiments. What say you? Do you resolve on this heavenly course or no? Will you let go

all your sinful, fleshly pleasures, and daily seek after these higher delights? I pray thee, reader, here shut the book, and consider of it; and resolve on the duty before thou go further. Let thy family perceive, let thy neighbours perceive, let thy conscience perceive, yea, let God perceive it, that thou art a man that hast thy daily conversation in heaven. God hath now offered to be thy daily delight. Thy neglect is thy refusal. What, refuse delight; and such a delight! If I had propounded you only a course of melancholy, and fear, and sorrow, you might better have demurred on it. Take heed what thou dost: refuse this, and refuse all. Thou must have heavenly delights, or none that are lasting. God is willing that thou shouldst daily walk with him, and fetch in consolation from the everlasting fountain. If thou be unwilling, even bear thy loss; and one of these days, when thou liest dying, then seek for comfort where thou canst get it, and make what shift for contentment thou canst. Then see whether thy fleshly delights will stick to thee, or give thee the slip; and then conscience, in despite of thee, shall make thee remember, that thou wast once persuaded to a way for more excellent pleasures, that would have followed thee through death and have lasted thee to everlasting. What man will go in rags, that may be clothed with the best; or feed on pulse, that may feed of the best; or accompany with the vilest, that may be a companion to the best, and admitted into the presence and favour of the greatest? And shall we delight so much in our clothing of the flesh, and feed so much on the vain pleasures of earth, and accompany so much with sin and sinners, when heaven is set open, as it were, to our daily view, and God doth offer us daily admittance into his presence! O how is the unseen God neglected, and the unseen glory forgotten, and made light of! And all because they are unseen, and for want of that faith which is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things that are not seen. (Heb. xi. 1.)

But for you, sincere believers, whose hearts God hath weaned from all things here below, I hope you will value his heavenly life, and fetch one walk daily in the New Jerusalem. I know God is your love, and your desire; and I know you would fain be more acquainted with your Saviour; and I know it is your grief that your hearts are not more near him; and that they do no more freely and passionately love him, and delight in him. As ever you would have all this mended, and enjoy your desires,

O try this life of meditation on your everlasting rest! Here is the Mount Ararat, where the fluctuated ark of your souls must rest. Oh! let the world see, by your heavenly lives, that religion lieth in something more than opinions and disputes, and a task of outward duties; let men see in you, what a life they must aim at. If ever a Christian be like himself, and answerable to his principles and profession, it is when he is most serious and lively in this duty: when as Moses, before he died, went up into Mount Nebo, to take a survey of the land of Canaan; so the Christian doth ascend this mount of contemplation, and take a survey, by faith, of his rest. He looks upon the glorious, delectable mansions, and saith, "Glorious things are" deservedly "of spoken thee, O thou city of God." He heareth, as it were, the melody of the heavenly choir, and beholdeth the excellent employment of those spirits, and saith, "Blessed are the people that are in such a case; yea, blessed are they that have the Lord for their God." He next looketh to the glorified inhabitants of that region, and saith, "Happy art thou, O the Israel of God, a people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy strength, the sword of thine excellency." When he looketh upon the Lord himself, who is their glory, he is ready with the rest to fall down and worship him that liveth for ever, and say, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come: thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power." When he looks on the glorified Saviour of the saints, he is ready to say Amen to that new song, "Blessing, honour, glory, and power, be to him that sitteth on the throne and to the Lamb for ever and ever; for he hath redeemed us out of every nation by his blood, and made us kings and priests to God." When he looketh back on the wilderness of this world, he blesseth the believing, patient, despised saints; he pitieth the ignorant, obstinate, miserable world; and for himself, he saith, as Peter, "It is good to be here;" or, as David, "It is good for me to draw near to God:" for all those that are far from him shall perish.

Thus, as Daniel in his captivity did three times a day open his window toward Jerusalem, though far out of sight, when he went to God in his devotions; so may the believing soul, in this captivity to the flesh, look towards Jerusalem which is above: and as Paul was to the Colossians, so may he be, with the glorified spirits, absent in the flesh, but present in spirit, joining in beholding their heavenly order. (Col. ii. 5.) And as divine

Bucholcer, in his last sermon before his death, did so sweetly descant upon those comfortable words, "Whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life," (John iii. 16,) that he raised and ravished the hearts of his otherwise sad hearers; so may the meditating believer do, through the Spirit's assistance, by his own heart. And as the pretty lark doth sing most sweetly, and never ceaseth her pleasant ditty while she hovereth aloft, as if she were there gazing into the glory of the sun, but is suddenly silenced when she falleth to the earth; so is the frame of the soul most delectable and divine while it keepeth in the views of God by contemplation: but, alas! we make there too short a stay, but down again we fall, and lay by our music.

But, O Thou, the merciful Father of spirits, the attractive of love, and ocean of delights, draw up these drossy hearts unto thyself, and keep them there till they are spiritualised and refined, and second these thy servant's weak endeavours, and persuade those that read these lines to the practice of this delightful, heavenly work. And, O suffer not the soul of thy most unworthy servant to be a stranger to those joys which he unfoldeth to thy people, or to be seldom in that way which he hath lined out here to others; but O keep me while I tarry on this earth, in daily serious breathings after thee, and in a believing, affectionate walking with thee: and when thou comest, O let me be found so doing, not hiding my talent, nor serving my flesh, nor yet asleep with my lamp unfurnished, but waiting and longing for my Lord's return: that those who shall read these heavenly directions, may not reap only the fruit of my studies, and the product of my fancy, but the breathings of my active hope and love: that if my heart were open to their view, they might there read the same most deeply engraven with a beam from the face of the Son of God; and not find vanity, or lust, or pride within, where the words of life appear without; that so these lines may not witness against me; but proceeding from the heart of the writer, may be effectual, through thy grace, upon the heart of the reader; and so be the savour of life to both. Amen.

Glory be to God in the highest;
On earth peace:
Good-will towards men.

BROUGHTON

IN THE

CONCLUSION OF HIS 'CONSENT OF SCRIPTURE,'

Concerning the New Jerusalem, and the Everlasting Sabbatism, meant in my Text, as begun here, and perfected in Heaven.

THE company of faithful souls called to the blessed marriage of the Lamb, are a Jerusalem from heaven. (Apoc. iii. and xxi., Heb. xii.) Though such glorious things are spoken concerning this city of God, the perfection whereof cannot be seen in this vale of tears; yet here God wipeth all tears from our eyes, and each blessing is here begun. The name of this city much helpeth Jew and Gentile to see the state of peace, for this is called Jerusalem, and that in Canaan hath Christ destroyed: this name should clearly have taught both the Hebrews not to look and pray daily for to return to Canaan, and pseudo-Catholics, not to fight for special holiness there. We live in this by faith, and not by eye-sight, and by hope we behold the perfection; of this city, salvation is a wall, goodly as jasper, clear as crystal: the foundations are in number twelve, of twelve precious stones, such as Aaron wore on his breast, all the work of the Lamb's twelve apostles: the gates are twelve, each of pearl, upon which are the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, of whose faith all must be which enter in; twelve angels are conductors from east, west, north, and south, even the stars of the churches: the city is square: of burgesses settled for all turns. Here God sitteth upon a stone like jasper and ruby, comfortable and just: the Lamb is the temple, that a third temple should not be looked for to be built. Thrones twice twelve are for all the Christians born of Israel's twelve, or taught by the apostles, who for dignity are seniors, for infinity

are termed but four-and-twenty, in regard of so many tribes and apostles. Here the majesty is honourable, as at the delivery of the law, from whose throne, thunder, voices, and lightnings, do proceed: here oil of grace is never wanting, but burning with seven lamps, the Spirits of Messias,[a] of wit and wisdom, of counsel and courage, of knowledge and understanding, and of the fear due to the Eternal: here the valiant, patient, witty, and speedy, with sharp sight, are winged as those seraphims that waited on Christ, when ten calamities and utter destruction was told for the low Jerusalem: they of this city are not as Israel after the flesh, which would not see, for all the wonders that our Lord did; but these redeemed with his precious blood are full of eyes lightened by lamps, the glory of Jehovah, and behold Christ through all the prophets, a Performer of our faith, sealed of God, Sealer of all visions, Opener of the seals or the stories of the church. (John vi.; Dan. ix. 24; Apoc. vi.) Here is the true light, where the saved walk; (Isa. lx.;) hither kingdoms bring their glory; hither the blessed nations carry their jewels. (Apoc. xxi.) This is a kingdom uncorrupted, which shall not be given to a strange and unclean people: they must be written in the book of the Lamb, and chosen of eternity, sanctified of God, which here are citizens: (Ephes. i. 4; ii. 19:) through this there gusheth a stream better than the four in Eden, a stream of lively waters by belief in Christ, as those waters flowing from Lebanon: (Cant. iv. 15:) here is that Tree of Life in the midst of the paradise of God, with leaves to heal the nations that will be cured, while it is said to-day, with twelve fruits to give food continually to such as feed also upon the hidden manna, who after death receive the crown of justice and life, the morning star, white clothing, and the white stone, wherein a name is written equal to all the law. (Deut. xxvii. 2.) The first seat of the first Adam in the first paradise was glorious; this is better; and as Moses began with the terrestrial, so the holy word ends in the celestial; that to wheels full of eyes may the writ of truth be compared: the full consent and melody of prophets and apostles, how their harps are tuned on Mount Sion, (Apoc. xiv.) it will fully appear in the full sight of peace, when our bodies are made conformable to Christ's glorious body (Phil. iii. 21) in the world to come, and our eyes shall see the Lord in that Sion. For that coming, "O thou whom my soul

[a] Talmud. in Sanhedrim. Cha. Chelec. p. 73. b.

loveth, be like to the roes upon the mountains." (Cant. i. 7; ii. 17.) Amen. Even so come, Lord Jesus. Then shall we in perfect holiness worship thee, to whom the angels always give holy worship, saying, "Praise, and glory, and wisdom, and thanks, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for evermore." Amen.

A POEM

OF

MASTER G. HERBERT, IN HIS 'TEMPLE.'

HOME.

Come, Lord, my head doth burn, my heart is sick,
While thou dost ever, ever stay,
Thy long deferrings wound me to the quick;
My spirit gaspeth night and day.
O show thyself to me,
Or take me up to thee.

How canst thou stay, considering the pace
The blood did make which thou didst waste;
When I behold it trickling down thy face,
I never saw thing make such haste.
O show thyself to me,
Or take me up to thee.

When man was lost, thy pity look'd about,
To see what help in th' earth or sky;
But there was none, at least no help without,
The help did in thy bosom lie.
O show thyself to me,
Or take me up to thee.

There lay thy Son; and must he leave that nest,
That hive of sweetness, to remove
Thraldom from those, who would not at a feast
Leave one poor apple for thy love?
O show thyself to me,
Or take me up to thee.

He did, he came. O my Redeemer dear,
After all this canst thou be strange?
So many years baptis'd, and not appear?
As if thy love could fail or change.
O show thyself to me,
Or take me up to thee.

Yet if thou stayest still, why must I stay?
My God, what is this world to me?
This world of wo. Hence, all ye clouds, away;
Away: I must get up and see.
O show thyself to me,
Or take me up to thee.

What is this weary world? This meat and drink,
That chains us by the teeth so fast?
What is this womankind, which I can wink
Into a blackness and distaste?
O show thyself to me,
Or take me up to thee.

With one small sigh thou gav'st me th' other day,
I blasted all the joys about me;
And scowling on them as they pin'd away;
Now come again, said I, and flout me.
O show thyself to me,
Or take me up to thee.

Nothing but drought and dearth, but bush and brake,
Which way soe'er I look, I see;
Some may dream merrily, but when they awake,
They dress themselves, and come to thee.
O show thyself to me,
Or take me up to thee.

We talk of harvests; there are no such things,
But when we leave our corn and hay:
There is no fruitful years, but that which brings
The last and lov'd, though dreadful day.
O show thyself to me,
Or take me up to thee.

O loose this frame; this knot of man untie,
That my free soul may use her wing,
Which is now pinion'd with mortality,
As an entangl'd, hamper'd thing.
O show thyself to me,
Or take me up to thee.

What have I left that I should stay and groan;
The most of me to heaven is fled:
My thoughts and joys are all pack'd up and gone,
And for their old acquaintance plead.
O show thyself to me,
Or take me up to thee.

Come, dearest Lord, pass not this holy season;
My flesh and bones and joints do pray;
And even my verse, when by the rhyme and reason
The word is Stay, says ever, Come.
O show thyself to me,
Or take me up to thee.

AN ADDITION

TO

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER OF THE THIRD PART

OF THE

SAINT'S REST.

It hath seemed meet to Mr. K. to second Mr. Crandon, by an impetuous opposition of my poor labours; and having in his first volume against Mr. G. assaulted my Aphorisms; in the second, to fall upon my 'Method for Peace of Conscience,' and my book of 'Rest;' against the twelfth chapter (misprinted the eleventh) of the Third Part, he hath a copious digression, which I will now not characterise, either as to the intellectuals or morals, the judgment or honesty appearing in it; having reserved that to a second and plain admonition to himself. But because I intended these writings for ordinary capacities, I would have nothing remain in them which may be an occasion of their stumbling: for the sake therefore of such readers as would neither err, nor be puzzled with contentious janglings about mere words, I shall give them this brief advertisement following. It is so far from my desire to teach men to build the peace of their consciences upon any nice philosophical controversies, much less on any errors or singular opinions of mine, that I desire nothing more than to lead them to, and leave them on, the plain, infallible word of God. My own judgment concerning that sincere, saving grace, which we may safely try our estates by, I have as plainly as I could laid down in that chapter, and my 'Directions for Peace;' and in sect. 39, to sect. 53, of my 'Reply to Mr. Blake:' from whence I must desire the reader to fetch it, and not from the interpretations of Mr. K., which so seldom hath the hap to be acquainted with the truth, and who professeth himself that he doth not understand me:

whether it be long of me or himself I determine not. To these I shall now add only these few words.

The everlasting enjoyment of God in glory by perfected man, is the felicity which all should desire and seek. This is propounded to us by God in his word, and the necessary mean thereto prescribed; even Jesus Christ, and faith in him, and obedience to him, and to God in and by him. The distempered, sensual appetite, and depraved will of man, do incline to inferior sensual delights. God hath resolved that these shall not be their felicity, and that they shall never be happy in the enjoyment of him, except they take him for their chief good, and so far forsake inferior good which would draw the heart from him: and except also they give up themselves to his Son Jesus Christ, and to his Spirit, to be recovered unto him. Though all men by nature desire to be happy; yet all do not desire God as their happiness. Nor do the regenerate themselves yet perfectly desire him, or perfectly forsake that inferior good; which was their supposed happiness before they were renewed. The understanding is commonly acknowledged to have three kinds of acts: 1. A simple apprehension of the mere entity of a thing, or of a simple term; 2. Judgment, or the conception of a complex term; 3. Discourse. The first alone moves not the will, because it concludes not of the goodness or evil of the thing apprehended. The second, judgment, is either about the end or the means: and either absolute or comparative. Several things are commonly called man's end, how properly I now inquire not. 1. Felicity in general; 2. Himself the subject, commonly called *the finis cui;* 3. The natural and moral perfection of his person; 4. The act of fruition, or perfect complacency in the blessed object upon a full vision; commonly called, our formal felicity: 5. The object itself, that is, the blessed God, commonly called our objective felicity, and our *finis qui, or cujus*, whether fitly, we shall better know hereafter. The two first nature hath tied us to; but not to the object, nor to the perfection of the soul in a spiritual suitableness thereto. The first absolute judgment produceth in the will a simple complacency or displacency; this is the first motion of the will. The comparative judgment, where it is necessary, produceth intention and election, or else refusal, and resolves the fluctuating will. Where there is but one good propounded, either one objective end, or one means of absolute necessity, or wherever there is *omnimoda ratio boni*, nothing but good apparent in the

object, there is no work for consultation, or the comparative act of judgment, and consequently for election: but the absolute judgment would proceed to the practical, and carry out the will to intention and prosecution: were not man's soul blinded and depraved, there should be no deliberation about his end, and so no choosing of God as our end, but an absolute intending him, as having no competitor: and it cannot be without great sin for the judgment to make any question or comparison, and so to deliberate, Whether God or the creature be our felicity; and, Whether God or our carnal selves should be our end? But seeing our depraved judgment and will, and vitiated senses, and the tempter's setting the creature in competition with God, do necessitate a comparative judgment and deliberation, even about our end itself; therefore there is a kind of election of God as before the creature, or a consent or resolution so to prefer him, that is necessary, before or with a right intention and prosecution of that end: besides, the election of the new means, that is necessary; seeing Satan and our flesh are so ready to propound wrong means, in competition with the means of God's prescribing. All this being so, I further add, that the same will that hath a complacency in a thing as judged simply good, may yet reject and nill it, or refuse to seek or receive it, if it be judged either a lesser good inconsistent with a greater, or any way to have more evil in it than good: and as the understanding doth at once apprehend it as good absolutely, or in some respect; and evil in other respects, and comparatively less good; so doth the will at once continue to love or will it so far as it is apprehended as good; and to nill and reject it as inconsistent with a greater good, or a hinderer of it. But if it fall out that the inconsistency of these is not discerned or believed, or but imperfectly, then may the will, by a practical volition, will them both.

To apply this. The understanding of the ungenerate may know that God is good, and good to them, and that in very many and weighty respects he is desirable. They may know that worldly things will shortly leave them, and then if they have not God's favour they shall perish. But if they have, they shall attain both perfection of body, (which they may desire,) and perfection of mind, (which they do desire in general, and may submit to in the particular way of holiness, as more tolerable than hell,) besides some imperfect ineffectual knowledge of a beauty and desirableness in holiness itself, accompa-

nied with an answerable motion of the will: but every unrenewed man hath more prevalent apprehensions of the goodness of the creature, partly by unmastered sense, and partly by perverted reason, and therefore apprehendeth God as evil to him; so far as he would hinder his enjoyment thereof, or would punish him for a sinful adhering to it. So that, 1. His highest practical estimation is of the creature, yet not without some esteem of God: 2. and his prevailing will is to the creature, but not without some will to God. And, ordinarily, such men are so fully convinced of the impossibility of enjoying the creature for ever, and being happy any other way than in God, that, though they could wish an everlasting fulness of the creature, yet, seeing none but fools do intend an end which they know impossible to be attained, they do therefore compound a felicity in their own fancies, of the world for a time, and heaven for everlasting: one part standing in the enjoyment of the delights of the flesh, while they live here, and the other in the deliverance from hell and blessedness in heaven hereafter: hoping that these are not inconsistent, but they may have heaven when they can enjoy the world no longer; because they see that many saints possess abundance of earthly blessings, and persecution is not now so common as it hath been, therefore they suppose they may possess the like: upon which expectation they enjoy what the godly do but use, and so give it the pre-eminence in their hearts: or if they be convinced of the inconsistency of a carnal mind, (in a prevalent degree,) with an interest in the happiness of the life to come, they will either persuade themselves that they are not carnally-minded when they are, or, one way or other, will underprop their hopes of enjoying both: but still their fleshly mind is predominant, and therefore they will cast their salvation upon the adventure of such hopes as have nothing but their own delusions to support them.

On the other side, the regenerate being here imperfect in all their graces, are imperfectly taken off those carnal ends which they intended in their unsanctified state, and imperfectly inclined to God as their end: so are they also, both in discerning and choosing the fittest means, even Christ himself and obedience to him, so that the best are carnally-minded, in some degree, but not in a prevalent degree, for then they should die. The flesh and world have still some interest in the saints, but not the strongest. As God and the Redeemer may have some

interest, though not the chiefest, in the practical judgment and will of the unsanctified. Whether, you will say, that the same man hath two distinct inconsistent ends; one as regenerate, the other so far as he is still carnal; or whether you will give the name of an end only to that good which hath the greatest interest in him, I will not contend about a word. If that only be called our end, which is prevalently intended in the main course of our lives, then it is God only that is our end: but if that may be called a man's end which is intended in his distempers and deviations, then the creature may be called our end so far as we are still carnal; for it is not only as a wrong-chosen means to our right end, that we sinfully adhere to the creature; but it is more as it stands in competition with our right end, and as we will and love our flesh-pleasing for itself. It is true, the sensual appetite may desire it for itself, because it belongs not to carry us higher, and to intend an end: but the rational power must subordinate both creatures, and our natural delight in them to God. And I do not think that it is by the mere brutish irrational motion that the godly adhere too much to the creature.

I did therefore deliver my thoughts on this point thus: that as the act is denominated from the object, and specified by it, so the grace that is saving must, as to the acts, consist not only in the absolute, but comparative judgment, and in that choice or comparative willing that follows thereupon; and though there be forty intricate, philosophical controversies about man's willing the end and means, which stand in their way that would make the most exact discussion of this point, yet every Christian may safely go on these grounds, and conclude that when Christ's interest is predominant, or greatest in the soul, there is saving grace; but where it is not, there is none, though yet he may have some interest there. Here is a double pre-eminence that Christ must have, or a double prevalency of grace, that it may be saving. 1. The object must be preferred before that which stands in competition with it. 2. The act must be prevalent in degree against its contrary, so far as that the heart and life may be denominated from it. 1. The absolute act of the judgment makes no comparison; therefore in that only the latter must be looked after. Assent to God's word upon his authority, must be prevalent against our dissent; and that will appear in our serious obeying it, &c. 2. In the comparative act of the judgment there must be both. God must be valued and esteemed

above all creatures; and our esteem must be prevalent against our slighting and disesteem of him. 3, The main point of trial is in the will, and there must be both these prevalencies before-mentioned. God must be willed as better than all creatures; and our willing of him must be in a prevalent degree against our nilling or unwilling. For there is in the best on earth some remainders of averseness to God, which may be called a hating of him, so far as they are carnal, though they are not therefore fitly to be called haters of God, but lovers of him: because they must be denominated from the prevalent part. The like may be said of all the affections, so far as they are of the rational part; for of the sensitive passions there is not so sure a judgment to be made, as I expressed p. 213, and in my 'Method for Peace of Conscience.' In the choice of means all this is clear, if not much more. Christ must be preferred before all competitors, and all rejected for him; and our willingness must be in a degree that is prevalent against our unwillingness, and our faith as prevalent against unbelief, and our subjection must prevail against our rebellion, and our obedience against our disobedience in the course of our lives. He must have the main bent of our hearts and endeavours, though in a particular act the flesh may prevail. This is it that I have asserted, and with a consent to this I am satisfied. As for the point of specification of our acts, I never look to see the schools agreed about it, how confidently soever Mr. K. talks, as if they all conspired with him. Call the difference gradual or specifical, as you please, so we agree in the sense, I am content. I choose to call it a moral, specifical difference, and in that sense do maintain, that the faith of the best of the unsanctified is not specifically the same with that of the sanctified, and so of love and other graces. As to that saving faith, all other is but analogically called faith, as I have showed in the section before cited against Mr. Blake. But yet I am not of Mr. K.'s opinion about the natural specification of acts, for all his confidence. I yet think that acts are naturally, and not morally, specified from their objects, considered physically; and are morally specified by those objects, as related to the laws that command, forbid, threaten, promise, and so by the laws themselves; which Dr. Twiss will needs say are no species of acts, though vulgarly so called, 'Vind. Grat.' lib. ii. par. 2. digres. 9. p. 410.

I now desire no more of the reader than to consent, 1. To the express words of Scripture which I cited in that chap. 11.

sect. 15, which I desire him to review; 2. And to that which Mr. K. and I are agreed in. I hope you will take this for a reasonable motion, it being unlike that the Cretian pen of so bold a man, so self-conceited, and superciliously scornful, should grant me much more than he needs must. Let us examine his concessions for matter and words. 1. For sense, he confesseth, p. 137, thus: "I am of Mr. Baxter's mind, that no sober divine will tell us, that if we love God never so little without dissembling, yet he will accept it, though we love our lusts before him." So oft he yieldeth that all sincere love to God doth prefer him before all other. Where then is our difference? Why, he thinks that no others believe or love God at all but those that love him above all. I did affirm, that as to that same moral species of faith and love, they do not at all believe and love God, but as to another species they do, and truly do it. How oft doth Scripture say of the unsanctified, that they believe in Christ, at least for a time? But I shall leave it till I speak to Mr. K. himself, to prove that men unrenewed may have faith and love to Christ, though not saving. And whereas, our Doctor, according to the complexion of his conscience, doth prefer me to succeed Pelagius in his chair, for affirming that a carnal man, by the greatest help of common grace, as I opened my meaning, may have weak inclinations to spiritual and superior good, while he hath stronger to inferior, I would have him to review his sobriety, in making all divines and churches of Christ, since the apostles' days, so far as I am able to discern by my small reading, or by reports, to be Pelagians. I never heard of any that thought so basely of the highest measure of that grace which is not proper to the saints as this man doth. If it no whit lead to God, how is it grace? If this doctor dare warrant his hearers that they shall all be saved that have the least faith, or love, or inclination to God, I dare not imitate him. Except they love him above all, I dare not tell them that they are true disciples. Nor do I think that nature itself is averted from God in the highest degree, nor all the wicked of one degree of sinfulness, nor yet as bad as they shall be in hell. Our divines that tell us how far hypocrites may go, do not talk in the strain of this doctor.

Well, but how far are we yet disagreed even in terms? Why, I said, that it is not a natural, but a moral, specific difference, and so doth he. Page 109, he saith, "But against whom, I pray, do you dispute then? &c. I dare be bold to say there is

not one that affirms a natural or physical difference, as you call it, between acts of common and saving grace in this your sense." And is not it a pity that this doctor, that is so well agreed with me for sense and terms, should be put to the trouble of so tedious a digression? Forsooth, I did unhappily express myself, because I used not his term "appretiative," which though I neglected, I think, on sufficient reason, yet, to please him, I will use it when I think on it, and have no better. And so we had best part while we are friends.

TO THE READER.,

READER,

I AM so loth to leave thee under any mistake of my meaning in this point, that I shall yet make some further attempt for the explaining of it. And whereas I understand that some readers say that this nice distinguishing doth but puzzle men; and others still fear not falsely to give out, that I make common grace and special to differ only gradually, and not specifically, in despite of my express asserting of the contrary, I entreat the first sort to tear that leaf out of the book which speaks of this subject, that it may not trouble them; or to be patient while we speak a few words to others that understand that which they are but puzzled with. And I desire the second sort once more to remember, 1. That I still affirm, that common grace and special do differ by a moral specific difference, and not a gradual only. 2. But that this moral specific difference doth materially consist in a physical, gradual difference. 3. And it being a moral subject that we have in hand, our terms must be accordingly used and understood; and therefore it is most proper, when we speak of any unsanctified man, to say, that he is not a believer, he hath no faith, he hath no love to God, &c., because we are supposed to speak only of a true christian saving faith, love, &c. 4. But yet, when it is known that we speak of another faith and love, we may well say that an unsanctified man hath these; and when we inquire of the difference, we must be as exact as possible, in showing wherein it lieth, lest we delude the hypocrite, and trouble the regenerate. That the faith, and love, and sanctity of the ungodly are but equivocally, or analogically, so called, in respect to the faith and love of the saints, I have proved in my Fifth Disputation of Right of Sacraments.

That which I shall now add to make my sense as plain as I can, shall be these following distinctions and propositions.

We must distinguish between, 1. Those gracious acts that are about our end, and those that are about their means. 2. Between God considered generally as God, and considered in his

several properties and attributes distinctly. And Christ considered personally, and considered fully in the parts of his office, whether the essential or integral parts. 3. Between the goodness of God in himself considered, and as suitable unto us. 4. Between the simple act of the intellect, and the comparing act. 5. Between the simple velleity of the will, and the choice that followeth the comparate act of the intellect. 6. Between the speculative and practical act of the intellect. 7. And between the acts of the will that answer these two. 8. Between an end that is ultimate, but not principal and prevalent, and an end that is ultimate and chief also.

Prop. 1. An unsanctified man may love him that is the true God, and believe in that person who is Jesus Christ, the Redeemer. This is past controversy among us.

Prop. 2. An ungodly man may love God as the cause of his prosperity in the world.

Prop. 3. He may know that his everlasting happiness is at the disposal of God, and may believe him to be merciful, and ready to do good, and that to him; and consequently may have some love to him as thus gracious and merciful.

Prop. 4. He may by a simple apprehension know that God is good in himself, and goodness itself, and preach this to others; and consequently may have in his will a consent or willingness hereof, that God be what he is, even infinite goodness.

Prop. 5. He may have a simple apprehension that God should be glorified, and honoured by the creatures: and so may have a simple velleity that he may be glorified.

Prop. 6. He may have a general dim apprehension, that everlasting happiness consists in the sight of the glory of God, and in his love, and favour, and heavenly kingdom, and so may have some love to him as thus apprehended.

Prop. 7. He may compare God and the creature together, and have a speculative or superficial knowledge that God is better than the creature, and better to him; and may write and preach this to others: and so may have an answerable, superficial, ineffectual velleity or love to him, even as thus considered.

Prop. 8. One and the same man may have two contrary ultimate ends of his particular actions; even the pleasing of God, and the pleasing of his flesh: proved.

Argument 1. If the same heart may be partly sanctified, and partly unsanctified (that is, in some degree) then it may have two contrary ends; or, if the same man may have flesh and

spirit, then he may have two contrary ultimate ends. But the antecedent is certain; therefore, so far as man is carnal and unsanctified, flesh-pleasing and carnal self is his end.

Argument 2. If the same man might not have two contrary ultimate ends, then the godly should never sin but in the mischoosing of the means, or abating the degrees of love to God: but the consequent is false, and against experience; therefore, Peter did not only mischoose a means to God's glory when he denied his Master. A godly man, when he is drawn to eat or drink too much, doth it not only as a mistaken means to glorify God, but ultimately to please his flesh. Either David, in adultery did desire flesh-pleasing for itself, or for some other end. If for itself, then it was his ultimate end in that act: if for somewhat else, as his end; for what? No one will say his end was God's glory: and there is nothing else to be it.

Prop. 9. There is a continual striving between these two contrary ends where they are; one drawing one way, and the other the other way; and sometimes one, sometimes the other, prevailing in particular acts.

Prop. 10. But yet, every man hath one only prevalent ultimate end, which is to be called *finis hominis*, or is the chief ultimate end of the habitual predominant inclination or disposition of his soul, and of the tenor or bent of his course of life. And that which goes against his habitual bent, is said to be the act, not of him, but of something in him, that is, not of that predominant disposition which should denominate the man to be godly or ungodly, but of some subdued disposition that, by accident, hath got some advantage.

Prop. 11. As godly men have God for their end, as to the predominant habit of their souls and bent of their lives, so all wicked men in the world have the creature and carnal self for their end, as to the predominant habit of their hearts and bent of their lives; so that this is simply to be called their several end which is the ruling end, and hath the greatest interest in them; but yet, as carnal self is a subdued, resisting end in the godly, prevailing in some particular actions, as is too sure, so God and salvation may be a stifled, abused, subjected end of the ungodly that have but common grace, and may prevail against the flesh in some particular outward actions.

This is evident in the foregoing propositions. If a man by common grace may have such a simple and superficial appre-

hension of God as is before mentioned, knowing him to be good in himself; yea, best, and good and best to him, when yet, at the same time, he hath a more deep, predominant, habitual apprehension that the creature is best for him, then certainly he may have a subdued love to God as best in himself, and to him, that is answerable to this superficial knowledge, and consisteth with a predominant, habitual love to the creature and carnal self. I would desire every divine to beware that he tell not the unsanctified, that whoever hath the least degree of love to God for himself, and not as a means to carnal ends, shall certainly be saved; for he would certainly deceive many thousand miserable souls that should persuade them of this. He that believeth that there is a God, believeth that he is the chief Good, and best for him if he could see his glory, and fully enjoy his love for ever: and many a wicked man doth preach all this, and thinks as he speaks. But it is all but with a superficial, opinionative belief, which is mastered by more strong apprehensions of a contrary good; and so they love but with a superficial love, that is answerable to a mere opinionative belief, and is conquered by a more potent love to the contrary. So that, strictly, if you denominate not that single act, nor the person as thus disposed, but the bent of his affections, or the person, according to what indeed he is in the predominant habit of his soul, so it is fittest to say, that the godly loveth not the world, nor the things of the world, and the wicked loveth not God, nor the things of God, as such.

Prop. 12. The sincere intending of the end doth concur to constitute a sincere choice of the means. And therefore the schoolmen say, that charity, or love to God, informeth all other graces: not being the form of them as such or such acts or habits, but as gracious means. As the means are essentially as means for the end, and so animated by it, so the mediate acts of grace, as mediate, are essentially animated by the love of the end, and participate of it. In this sense their doctrine of the informing of other graces by love, is not only true, but of very great weight, and giveth light to many other points. And thus, as men of common grace have only an abused, subdued will or love to God as their end, that is conquered by the contrary, so they have but an unanswerable faith in Christ as the way to God the Father, and an unanswerable use of all other means, which will never bring them to attain the end that is so superficially

and ineffectually apprehended and intended. I desire the learned reader to peruse well the first disputation of Rada for Scotus on this question.

Prop. 13. The acts of love or faith are considerable, 1. Physically. 1. In general, as faith and love. 2. In special, as this faith and love about this object, the Father and Son. And thus, by common grace men may have true faith and love; that is, such as is physically a true or real act. 2. They are considerable morally; and that, 1. Either as duty answering a precept, "Believe and love God;" and thus they have an analogical, defective morality in them, and so are thus far sincere or true; but not that same true love or faith, *in specie morali*, which the command requireth. For it commandeth us to love God above all, &c. 2. They are considerable as conditions of the promises and evidences of spiritual life in the soul; and thus wicked men, by common grace, are never made partakers of them. They have not the things themselves. Their faith and love is not the same thing which hath the promises made to them in the Gospel, and so are not true or sincere.

Prop. 14. By common grace men may love God under the notion of the chiefest good and most desirable end, and yet not with that love which the chiefest good must be loved with, and therefore it is not morally sincere or saving.

Prop. 15. There is no notion whatsoever that a true Christian hath of God, and no word that he can speak of him, but an unregenerate man may have some apprehension of that same notion, and speak those words, and know every proposition concerning God and Christ, as Redeemer, which a godly man may know; and so may have some love to God, or faith in Christ in that same notion, though not with such a clear effectual apprehension, and lively powerful love, as the sanctified have.

Object. He cannot love God as his end. Answ. I have proved before that he may with a superficial, ineffectual, subdued love.

Object. He cannot love him as the chief good. Answ. I have proved that he may love him under that notion, though not with that love which the chief good must be loved with.

Object. He cannot believe in Christ, or desire him as a Saviour to free him from every sin. Answ. Not with a prevalent faith or desire, for still he hath more love than averseness to that sin, and therefore more averseness than love to Christ as such; but

as in general he may wish to be free from all sin, so in particular he may have effectual wishes to be free from his most beloved sin in several respects.

Object. But not to be free from sin as sin, or as against God. Answ. Yes; a man by common grace may know that sin as sin is evil, and therefore may have ineffectual wishes to be freed from it as such; but at the same time he hath stronger apprehensions of the pleasure, profit, or credit that it brings him, and this prevaileth. Indeed, men's carnal interest, which in sin they love, is not its opposition to God, nor the formal nature of sin. Doubtless all men that are ungodly, do not therefore love sin because it is sin, and against God; at least this is not so total in them, but that there may be a subdued mind to the contrary, and dislike of sin as against God. Many a common drunkard I have known, that when he hath heard or talked of sin as sin, and as against God, hath cried out against himself, and wept as if he abhorred it, and yet gone on in it, for the pleasure of the flesh.

Object. But where, then, is man's natural enmity to God and holiness? Answ. 1. It is doubtful whether man naturally have an enmity to God and holiness considered simply, or only considered as being against man's carnal interest. 2. But were the former proved, yet common grace abateth that enmity, and gives men more than corrupted nature doth.

Object. But the experience of the godly telleth them that it is another kind of light and love which they have after conversion than before. Answ. 1. It is not all converts that can judge by experience in this; because all have not had common grace in the highest, or any great observed measure before conversion. 2. It is hard for any to make that experiment, because we know not in our change just when common grace left, and special grace begun. 3. A physical, gradual difference may be as great as that which your experience tells you of. Have you experience of common light and love before conversion, and of another since which differeth from it more than the greatest flame from a spark, and more than the sunshine at noon from the twilight, when you cannot know a man; or more than the sight of the cured blind man, that saw clearly, from that by which he saw men like trees; or more than the pain of the strappado from the smallest prick of a pin?

Object. But it is not common gifts that are worked up to be special grace. One species is not turned into another. Answ.

True: imperfection is not turned materially into perfection. The dawning of the day is not materially turned into the greater light at noon; but a greater light superveneth, and is added to the less. The blind man's seeing men like trees, was not it that was the perfect, following sight, but an additional light was it.

Object. But special grace is the divine nature, the image of God, the new creature, &c., and therefore doth differ more from common.

Answ. I easily yield the antecedent, but deny the consequence. The difference is as admirably great as these terms express, though it be but a moral specific difference.

Reader, I will trouble thee no more but to entreat thee, if thou be of another mind, to differ from me without breach of charity, as I do from thee, and to remember that I obtrude not my explications on any. And if I have done thee wrong, it is but by telling thee my thoughts, which thou hast liberty to accept or reject as thou seest cause. But again I entreat thee, rather lay this by, or tear it out of the book, than it should be any stumbling-block in the way, or hinder thee from profiting by what thou readest. The Lord increase our light, and life, and love.

Jan. 15, 1657.

THE END.

INDEX

(ALPHABETICAL AND ANALYTICAL)

OF

THE PRINCIPAL MATTERS

CONTAINED IN

THE WORKS OF THE REV. RICHARD BAXTER.

*** *The Index of the Principal Matters, contained in the* LIFE OF MR. BAXTER, *will be found at the end of* VOLUME I.

†††† *The* LARGER *Roman Numerals in this Index refer to Volumes II. to XXIII.; the* SMALLER *Numerals and Arabic Figures, to the pages of each Volume.*

A.

ABBOT (Dr. Robert), testimony of, to the use of the term 'Puritan,' XVII. 73.

Abrogation of the Mosaic Law, considered, V. 544, 545.

Academies, observations on the course of study prosecuted in, XIV. 219—222. Address to tutors thereof, 222.

Accusation:—The question, Whether a man is ever bound to accuse himself, considered, VI. 380. Arguments and helps to patience under false accusation, XI. 443—448. Who will be the accuser at the day of judgment, XVII. 429. And what will be the accusation, 432—434.

Actions, the criterion for judging of our habitual state, XVI. 276—282.

Additions in matters of religion, not commanded in Scripture, whether lawful or unlawful, V. 505, 506. What are the additions of men which are not forbidden by the word of God, whether invented by rulers or by private men, 510—514. The mischiefs of unlawful additions in religion, 515, 516.

Admonition to civil rulers, considerations on, VI. 64—66.

Adoption, as the children of God, one of the benefits of conversion, VII. 198. What the witness of the Spirit of adoption is, IX. 53—55.

Adorning of the body, inordinate, sinfulness of, III. 159.

Adultery, no law against, enacted at Sparta, and why, III. 453. To be abhorred, IV. 120. Whether it dissolves the bond of matrimony, 159, 160. Whether a man may put away an adulterous wife, and without the magistrate's interference, or a woman may depart from an adulterous husband, and without a public legal divorce or sentence, 160—162. What is to be done where *both* parties commit adultery, 162. And if one commit adultery purposely, in order to be separated from the other, 163. What satisfaction is to be made by an adulterer, VI. 516, 517. Explanation of the Seventh Commandment respecting adultery, XIV. 217—226.

Adults not to be admitted into church-membership, without making a

previous profession of their faith, XIV. 414—425. What sort of profession is necessary, 425—429. By whom it is to be approved of, and judged, 429—445. On the admission of adults who have been baptised in infancy, their lives must be inquired after, which must be such as not to confute their profession, 469—471. Yet their profession is not necessarily to be a public one, 471. But when an adult is admitted into a particular church, his profession and admission must be either before the church, or made known to them, to be approved of by a judgment of discretion, 472—471. Desirableness of a register of adult members being kept, 478.

Advantages and prospects in life, fitted with temptations by Satan, II. 280. Directions against them, 281.

Advent of Christ in glory, how to be contemplated by faith, XII. 579—591. His second advent to be prayed for by believers, XVII. 590—595. The advent of Christ to judge the dead, explained, XIX. 83—87.

Affections, sinfulness of, in what it consists, II. 242, 243. Directions for holy affections in hearing the word preached, IV. 257—259. New affections implanted in the heart, in conversion, VII. 71—87. How the affections are to be excited in heavenly contemplation, XXIII. 350—367.

Affliction, a season for meditation, III. 196. With what sentiments we should go to God in affliction, XVIII. 179. Earnest and frequent prayer suited to sharp afflictions, 179, 180. Reasons why the people of God suffer so much affliction in this life, XXIII. 53, 54. Labour and trouble the common way to rest, 55. Afflictions are exceedingly useful, to keep us from mistaking our resting-place, 55—57. They are God's most effectual means to keep us from straggling out of the way of our rest, 57, 58. And also to quicken us in the way to our rest, 58, 59. It is but the flesh that is, for the most part, troubled and grieved by affliction 59—64. God seldom gives his people so sweet a foretaste of their future rest as in their afflictions, 64, 65. Objections urged by the flesh against afflictions, refuted, 66—70. Frequent believing views of glory the most precious cordial in afflictions, 242—248.

Aged persons especially bound to redeem time, III. 169. Are not prohibited from marrying, IV. 12, 13. Special directions to them, 396—403.

All-sufficiency of God, on the knowledge of, and its effects, XIII. 31.

Alleine's (Mr.) 'Alarm,' preface to, XIII. 535—550.

Alleyne (Right Hon. Thomas, Lord Mayor of London), dedication of a thanksgiving sermon to, XVII. 153, 154.

Almightiness. See *Omnipotence*.

Altar, whether the name may be used instead of Holy Table, V. 494. Whether the communion-table may be turned altar-wise, and railed in, and we may communicate there, 495.

Ambition, or the climbing up to high dignities or places, how to be denied, XI. 273—277.

Amen, import of, XIX. 158.

Anabaptists, holding no other error, may be permitted in church-communion, V. 365, 366. What judgment we are to form of the children of godly Anabaptists, whose judgments are against the dedication of infants unto God, XII. 517. Refutation of their appropriating to themselves the Catholic church, XVI. 308, 309. The introduction of Anabaptism a proof of Satan's enmity, XX. 293.

Angels, prayer to, both idolatrous and sinful, IV. 297, 298; XII. 565. The ministry of angels explained, V. 236—238. Our affinity or relation to them, 239. Wherein our converse with angels consisteth, XII. 564—568. Directions for holding communion with them, V. 240—245. The ministry of angels, one of the benefits resulting from conversion, VII. 201, 202. The conversion of a sinner a source of joy to them, 226, 227. Communion with angels a proof of the immortality of the soul, XVIII. 283.

Anger defined, as it respects ourselves, III. 290. When sinful, *ib.*, 291. Directions *meditative* against it, 291—295. *Practical* directions against it, 295—299.

Anointing, in baptism, origin of, V. 367. Its ill consequences, 369.

Antichrist, the term defined, V. 262. Whether it be necessary to believe that the pope is antichrist, *ib.*, 263.

Antiquity, judgment of, how far to be followed in controversies, V. 147. Testimonies of antiquity against persecution for alleged schism, 210—215.

Antinomians, some tenets of, stated, II. 154; XX. 295, 296. Their objections to the doctrine of the witness of the Spirit examined and refuted, IX. 56—61. Confutation of the Antinomian mistake which tells men that they must not glory nor fetch their comforts from any thing in themselves, 557—562.

Apocryphal Books, the lawfulness of reading, in the church, considered, V. 538, 539. The genuine canon of Scripture, how to be discerned from them, 537.

Apostasy, what, V. 158. The case of apostates, with regard to admission to church-membership, considered, XIV. 566—573. Whether all total apostacy be the sin against the Holy Ghost, XX. 246—251.

Apostates, affectionate address to, XX. xxxv.—xl. answers to the objections of apostates against the evidence for miracles, 114—124.

Apostles, whether they framed a creed or not, V. 528, 529. [See *Creed*.] Proofs that they were commissioned by Jesus Christ, to teach the churches all his doctrine, to deliver them all his commands and orders, and to settle and guide the first churches; *First*, From the words of their commission itself, XIII. 371—373: *Secondly*, From their performance of that commission, with its proper seal, 373: *Thirdly*, By the consent of all the Christian world, *ib.* Christ promised, and accordingly gave, his Spirit to the apostles, to enable them to execute their commission, 374—376. Who did actually appoint the first day of the week for holy worship, 376, 380—382. This act of theirs proved to be done by the special direction of the Holy Ghost, 414, 415. It is not to the dishonour, but the praise, of the apostles, that they taught the certain necessary things, plainly, and without the vanity of school uncertainties, XV. 139—149. Were not deceived themselves, nor deceived by others, XVIII. 436—438; XXI. 249—251. The doctrines and precepts delivered by them, proved to be from God, XIX. 33—53. Their credibility, XXI. 252. Proofs that they neither did nor could deceive others, 253—256.

Apparel, ends of, III. 626. What constitutes its fitness, *ib.* Unnecessary singularity in it to be avoided, *ib.*, 627. And also sordid vileness, or ridiculous fashions, 627. What constitutes pride in apparel, *ib.*, 628—632. How far it is lawful to follow the fashions, 632. Directions for the choice of apparel, 632—636. Costliness of apparel, when to be deemed prodigality, VI. 370. How far it is unlawful for men and women to apparel themselves so as to make them seem most comely and desirable, XIX. 224, 225.

Apparitions, a proof of the existence of the devil, XXI. 88; XXII. 320—324. Of his enmity against Christ, 272, 273. And of a future state of retribution, XXI. 89, 90. Account of the apparition of Marsilius Ficinus, 593, 594.

Appetite, sensitive, sin of, in what it consists, II. 243. Necessity of watching against the indulgence of it, III. 116. Not to be our rule or measure of eating, 389, 390. Inordinate appetite must be denied, XI. 152—158.

Apprentices. See *Young men*.

Aristides, anecdote of, XXI. 189, *note*.

Arrogancy of reason, in rejecting divine revelation repressed, XX. 395. Nature and working thereof, 403—411. Its causes, 411—419. Reasons to deter men from indulging it, 422—429.

Articles of faith, use of a variety of, V. 531, 532. The lawfulness of subscribing them, 540, 541. Mr. Baxter's opinion of the general design of the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, XV. 528. His sense of articles ii., iii., and iv., 529, 530. Of article vi., 530. Of articles vii., viii., ix., and x., 531. Of articles xi., xii., and xiii., 532. Of articles xiv., xvi, and xviii., 533. Of articles xxiii., xxv., and xxvi., 534.

Ascension of Christ into heaven, XIX. 81, 82.

Ashurst (Henry, esq.), funeral sermon on, XVIII. 124—145. His character, 146—159. Dedication of the sermon to his widow and family, 121—123.

Assemblies, public, directions for behaviour in, V. 215—222. Who has the power of appointing them, 464. Whether they may be omitted on the Lord's-day, if the magistrate forbid them, 465. Or may be held where there is no minister, 539, 540.

Associations of ministers, objections to, answered, XIV. 369—376.

Assurance or certainty of the saint's rest, nature of, XXII. 421, 422. How it is produced in us, 493—496. The

possibility of attaining it, 496—498. Hinderances which keep men from it, 498—535. Assurance of justification cannot be gathered from the least degree of saving grace, IX. 80—89. Twenty arguments proving it lawful to gather assurance from God's graces in us, 57—61. Assurance proved to be the lot only of a few of the strongest, most active, watchful, and obedient, 93—101. Even many of those, who have assurance of their conversion, are yet unassured of their salvation, for want of assurance to persevere, 101—103. Proofs that a Christian may live a joyful life, without assurance, 104—107. Why it is not a certainty, properly, of divine faith, 112, 113. Few of those who do attain assurance, have it perfectly or constantly, 121, 122. No one to expect so much assurance on earth as shall set him above all possibility of the loss of heaven, and above all apprehensions of real danger, 122—130. Assurance depends much on careful obedience, 151—155.

Athanasius's Creed, remark on, XXI. 313.

Atheism, practical, nature of, XIII. 180—183. Lamentatoin thereof, 183, 184. Arguments and motives against it, 184—197. Its sinfulness and danger, 197—199. Answer to those practical Atheists who think that God doeth us good by necessity of nature, 199—201. And to those who think that he is above our converse, and unsuitable to us, 201—204. To those who think it unfit for ignorant or poor men to think so much of God, 214—223. And to those who say that God regardeth not thoughts but deeds, 223—228. Gluttony, drunkenness, and sensuality, the causes of Atheism, III. 413, *note.* Atheism cherished by self-ignorance, XVI. 37—40.

Atheists in the world, who are such, IX. 357, 358.

Atonement (vicarious) of Christ, doctrine of, vindicated, XXI. 341—343.

Attributes of God, a tabular scheme of, II. 201. A short scheme of them, to be known, XIII. 19—21. The practical acknowledgment of them essential to walking with God, XIII. 156, 157.

Augustine, observations on some miracles mentioned by him, and by other ancient writers, XX. 121—124.

Autonomians, principles of, exposed, II. 155, 156.

Aversation (or backwardness) towards God, directions and cautions against, III. 286—290.

B.

Babbling, or *Idle Talk*, what it is, III. 534—536. Particular kinds of it, 537—541. Its sinfulness, XI. 169—174. The aggravations of idle words, III. 541—543. The mischief of them, 543—546. Directions and cautions against idle talk, 546—552. XI. 174, 175.

Backbiting, cases of conscience respecting, VI. 386—390. Directions against it, 391—394, XII. 526. Its great sinfulness, VI. 394—397.

Backsliders, different sorts of, IV. 351. The several degrees by which backsliders in judgment fall, 352, 353. Backsliders in heart, 353—355. Backsliders in life and practice, 355, 356. Signs of backsliding, 356—360. Directions to backsliders, 360—370. Directions for preventing backsliding, 371—378.

Bacon (Lord), observations of, on the blessings of peace, V. 172, *note.*

Badges of idolatry, or of any error, or sect, in what cases unlawful, V. 486, 487.

Baker (Elizabeth), some passages in the life of, XVII. 596—604.

Balcarras (Anne, Countess of), dedication to, of the mischiefs of self-ignorance, XVI. iii.—xxii. Address to her on her afflictions, xxii.—xxvi.

BAPTISM defined, V. 44, 326; XIX. 261. Its institution by Jesus Christ, V. 44, 45; XIX. 262.

I. *Mode and Subjects:*—Who only ought to be baptized, V. 46. Whether baptism administered by Romish clergy is null, 261. The right of infants to baptism, 326, 327, XIX. 264—26, 351—353. Their title to baptism and to the covenant blessings given them by God in his promise explained, V. 336—338, 340, 341—344. Whether they are really baptized, who are baptized according to the English liturgy and canons, where the power seems to be excluded, and those consent for the infant who have no power to do it, 344, 345. May a person offer his child to be baptized with the sign of the cross, or the use of the chrism? &c., 366, 367. The origin of anointing at baptism, of putting on a white garment, and tasting milk and honey, 367, 368. Whether they are lawful to us, 369. Form of cele-

brating the sacrament of baptism, XV. 484—492.
II. *Of Re-baptizing and Lay-baptism:* Whether baptism may be repeated, and when, V. 362—364; XIX. 267. Is baptism by laymen lawful in cases of necessity? V. 364. Whether it is a nullity, and the party must be re-baptized, *ib.* 365.
III. *Nature and efficacy of Baptism:*—Regeneration in baptism explained, II. 17, 18; V. 46. VII. 129. This not sufficient without being born of the Spirit, II. 18. Whether baptism, as such, enters the baptized into the universal church, or into a particular church, or both? V. 317, 318. Whether it is certain that all infants baptized, and dying before actual sin, are undoubtedly saved, 319—333. Baptized infants are justified from original sin, 331. Whether the infants' title to baptism, and to the covenant-benefits given to them by God in his promise, is upon any moral condition, or only upon the condition of their natural relation, that they are the seed of the faithful, 336—338. How the Holy Ghost is given to infants in baptism, 345—347. Whether all the children of true Christians have inward sanctifying grace, 347—354. Whether baptized persons have a right to the sanctifying operations of the Holy Ghost, absolutely or conditionally, and what are those conditions, 354—358. Whether grace is an effect of baptism, 358—361. The Holy Spirit, how confirmed in baptism, XIV. 461, 462. The mere baptism of infants, no necessary title to the admission of adults to church-membership without a profession of faith, 564—566. Proofs that the ancient doctors unanimously regarded the baptized as pardoned, justified, and adopted, 587, 588.
IV. *Baptismal Covenant:*—the true understanding of it, an important mean of knowing what true faith is, XI. 157—159. Directions for explaining it to children, IV. 273—275. What is a proper violation of our baptismal covenant, V. 361, 362. Whether this covenant is necessarily to be renewed at age by those who have been baptized in their infancy, 369, 370. Heads of the baptismal covenant, 526. Brief explanation of it, XIX. 262, 263, 334—337.
Bargains attended with loss when made by a trustee, friend, or servant, how far obligatory, VI. 299.
Basilides, account of the heresy of, XX. 283.
Bear-baiting, whether money may be given to see it, VI. 329.
Beauty, personal, vanity of trusting on, III. 61. How to be denied, XI. 280, 281.
Beginners in religion, directions to, for their establishment and safe proceeding, II. 89—169. The not advancing in good beginnings a hinderance of conversion, VII. 302. Direction to such as stop short in good beginnings, 303, 304.
Being of God, of the knowledge of, and its practical effects, XIII. 22—24.
Belief, human, use of, in order to evince matters belonging to divine belief, V. 127—130.
Believers, character of, described, XII. 18—24. Why they are more serious in matters of religion than unbelievers, 25—27. Exhorted to the serious exercise of faith, 33—53. How they are to live and die, 68—85. What is meant by believers and their seed, their being in the covenant, so as to have a right to baptism, V. 333, 334. Whether their children are certainly incurrent before baptism, or not until after they are baptized, 334—336. What hinders believers from knowing their graces, XVI. 199. The sense of the contraries, 199, 200. The smallness of grace, 200, 201. Not judging by sure marks, 201. Overvaluing what we have by not looking at what we ought to be, 205. Judging upon a disadvantage, 206. The variety and confusion of the soul's operations, 207. Ten infallible marks of grace which are found in all believers, XVII. 41—44. They are the servants of Christ, XVIII. 126, 127. And follow Him, 127—132. How they will be with Him where he is, 132—142. And will be honoured by his Father, 142, 143. Their souls, when they depart hence, will be with Christ, 253. The necessity of their believing this proved, 254. Whether it be best to believe it without consideration of the difficulties or proofs, 257—260. The certainty of it manifested, 260—298. How they are with Christ, 298—306. How they depart to be with Christ, 306—336. Why such departure is to be preferably chosen, 337—394. Applica-

tion of the doctrine, 391—434. The difference between this world and that to which the believer is going, 450—454. The reasons and helps of his belief, and hope of this perfection, 454—462. The prayer of a dying believer, XIX. 564—568. Reasons why all true believers shall have the witness of the Spirit in themselves, XX. 137—139. Their advantage in consequence against temptations to infidelity, 139, 140. And their mercy in having this witness, 141, 142. How they should make use of such inward witness against temptations to unbelief, 155—165. The believer's home, a poem, XXIII. 463—465. See *Disciples, Saints.*

Believing, true, wrought in conversion, VII. 26—28. Import of 'believing' in the apostles' creed, XIX. 58—61.

Bellarmine's (Cardinal) assertion, that sense is no judge of substances, but of accidents only, refuted, XV. 39—41. Refutation of his assertions about the supremacy of popes and councils, XVI. 312—314.

Benefices, ecclesiastical, whether they may be sold and bought, VI. 302, 303.

Benefits, general, from the redemption by Christ, VIII. 118—120. Special, to believers, 120—127. Upon what terms they are conveyed, 128—131. The certainty of them, 131. The benefits of being crucified to the world, IX. 536—551. Of the saving knowledge of the benefits, common and special, conferred by God as our Father, and the effects thereof, XIII. 129—135.

Benevolence defined, II. 459.

Berry (Colonel James), epistle dedicatory to, of the treatise on self-denial, XI. v.—xxvi.

Bibbing and *Bibbers*, different sorts of, III. 401—403. See *Tippling*.

Bishops, in what manner set over the churches by the Holy Ghost, V. 568. Whether, if one bishop ordain, and three or more protest against it, the person so ordained is to be received as a true minister, 302—304. Whether one bishop has power to ordain, degrade, govern, &c., in the diocese of another, 304. If a bishop enjoin an ungodly minister, and deny a more holy competitor, whether the people are bound to accept him, 271—274. Whether the bishop or the magistrate have the first and chief power of imposing a minister on the people, 275. If kings and bishops differ, who are to be obeyed, 56—59. Bishops may not take money for sermons, sacraments, or other offices, VI. 303. Bishops have no such power as the apostles had, XIX. 137. Nor any power of constraint by corporal punishments or mulcts, 142.

Blasphemous thoughts, to be instantly rejected, III. 229.

Blasphemy against the Son of Man explained, XX. 223. Against the Holy Ghost, II. 189. See *Sin against the Holy Ghost.*

Blessedness of the everlasting kingdom, in what it consists, VIII. 171—173.

Boasting, a sign of pride, III. 37.

Bolton (Rev. Robert), observation of, on the use of the word 'puritan,' XVII. 74. His description of a confirmed hypocrite, 74—78.

Bond of a third person, when it may be taken as security for money, VI. 319.

Books, importance and utility of, II. 151. To be carefully selected, 150. Books recommended by Mr. Baxter on conversion, 23. And on divinity, 152. IV. 268, 269. Books particularly recommended to young men, XV. 347, 348. Directions for the reading of books, IV. 266—269. And on the choice of them, V. 584—586. Lists of books recommended, 587—600. Remarks thereon, 601. Particular books against Popery, IV. 269; VI. 335. Tempting books, to be denied, XI. 176, 177.

Borrowing, cases of conscience respecting, VI. 315—328. What borrowing is theft, XIX. 233.

Bowing at the name of Jesus, whether lawful, V. 439.

Bowling for money, whether lawful, VI. 330.

Bread, import of the word in the Lord's Prayer, XIX. 148. The petition for daily bread explained, 148—151.

Bribery of justice, illegal, VI. 295, 296. May a promise of concealment of his fault be made to a bribe-taker? 297.

Broghill (Lord), dedication of 'The Unreasonableness of Infidelity' to, XX. iii.—vii.

Broughton (Hugh), observations of, on the New Jerusalem, and on the everlasting sabbatism which remaineth for the people of God, XXIII. 460—462.

Buildings, splendid, when they may, or may not, be erected, VI. 369. What it is to be 'built up in Christ,' VIII. 271.
Burial of the dead, form of, XV. 497, 498.
Business, excess of, a sinful waste of time, III. 166.
Burying, special cases of conscience respecting justice in, VI. 306—314. Rules to avoid sinful injury in buying and selling, XIX. 229.

C.

Cain, case of, considered, IX. 120; and also his flight into the land of Nod, XX. 437.
'*Cain and Abel Malignity*,' introductory preface to, X. ccccixxv—ccccixxx. A lamentation for the case of the deluded malignant world, 481—504. Who are malignant enemies to godliness, 507—519. Undeniable reasons against malignant enmity to serious godliness, 520—537. Objections and false accusations answered, 537—556.
Call of a minister by ordination, election, &c., whether necessary to the essence of a church, V. 266—268.
Calling:—that to be chosen in which we may be most serviceable, II. 332. Nothing excuses a man from having a calling, 333, 334, except disabilities, XII. 461. Directions for the proper choice of one, III. 583—586. Whether a man may change his calling, II. 333. Diligence in our calling a prevention of vain and idle thoughts, III. 196, 197; and particularly recommended for melancholy persons, 235. Whether a man may have a calling, consisting of occasional uncertain works, 582; or have divers trades and callings at once, 583. General rules about our proper callings, XII. 461—464.
Canaanites, the destruction of by the Israelites, considered, XIX. 212.
Canon of Scripture briefly proved, XXII. 335, 336. How to be ascertained, V. 537. Different degrees of certainty in the canonical authority of different books of Scripture, XV. 64, 65. Credibility of human testimony to the integrity of the canon, 53, 54. Objection to the late formation of the canon of Scripture, XX. 120.
Canons of the church, whether they are laws, V. 306—308. Whether they bind the conscience, 309, 310. Who has the power of making them, 316, 317; XIX. 258, 259.
Card-playing, sinfulness of, considered, III. 616—618; and for money, VI. 329, 330.
Cares, worldly, excess of, a sinful waste of time, III. 166. Directions against them, 69—94.
Carnal man's life described, IX. 357—359. The carnal mind one cause why men make light of Christ, XVI. 512. Directions to the converted against carnal security, XIX, 420, 421. Address to carnal-minded men to seek the saints' rest, XXII. 438—441. See *Flesh*.
Carpocrates, heresy of, XX. 283.
Catechisms, rise of, V. 530. Importance of committing a sound and well-composed catechism to memory, II. 99. The best method of a true catechism, V. 531. The mother's catechism, or a familiar way of catechising children, XVIII. 522—611. A catechetical manual, for the instruction of families and schools, XIX. 10—292. The shortest catechism, XIX. 572—574. A short Catechism for those who have learned the first, 575—601.
CATECHISING, importance of, XIV. xviii., XV. 75, 76.
I. *Reasons* for performing this duty.
1. The *Benefits*, XIV. 246. It will be the most hopeful advantage for the conversion of souls, 247—250; also the most orderly building up of those who are converted, 250. It will make public preaching better understood, 251. It will render ministers familiar with young people, *ibid.*; and also better acquainted with each person's spiritual state, *ibid.*, 252. This trial of their people's state will better satisfy them in the administration of sacraments, 252. They will be better enabled to guard their people against their particular temptations, 253. It will make men better informed of the nature of the ministerial office, 253—255; and of the nature of their duty to their ministers, 255—257. This practice will give the governors of the nation better information about the nature and burden of the ministry, 258—261. It may facilitate the ministerial service to the next generation that shall succeed, and prevent their rebellion against their teachers, 261. Ministers will keep their people from vanity, 262. It will promote the better ordering of families, and observance of the Lord's day, *ibid.* It will do some good to such ministers

as are disposed to be idle, *ibid.*; and produce many personal benefits to ministers themselves, *ibid.*, 263. It will take them and their people off from vain controversies, 263; and particularly certain existing controversies, 264. It will reform the people in the several parishes, and eventually the whole nation, 265, 266. The chief part of church reformation which yet remains, as to means, consists in catechising, 266. Address to ministers pressing this duty, xx.—xxvi. 266—272. Answers to objections, xviii.—xx.

2. The *Difficulties* of catechising, a second reason for performing this duty, XIV. 272—275.

3. The *Necessity* of undertaking this work, from the obligation of Scripture precepts, promises, and threatenings, XIV. 275—277. It is necessary, for bringing glory to God, 278; for the welfare of our people, *ib.*—280; and for the welfare of ministers, 280, 281. The subject pressed by way of humiliation and excitation, 281—296. Answers to objections against the labour and difficulty of the work, xviii.—xx. 296—312.

II. *Directions for catechising* aright. How to bring the people to submit to this course of private instruction, XIV. 313—317. Twelve directions to do it so as is most likely to succeed for the conversion of the ungodly, and the awaking of the secure, 318—336. How to deal with self-conceited persons who may come to be catechised, 336—342; and with those concerning whose conditions ministers are between hope and fear, 353, 354. Form of public catechising, and approving those who are to be admitted to the Lord's supper, XV. 492—494.

Censoriousness, or unwarrantable judging of others, cases of conscience respecting, VI. 398—402. Directions for the cure of sinful censoriousness, 402—406. The evil of this sin, 406—410. Directions for those who are rashly censured, 410—413.

Censure of Men, directions against over-valuing, I. 548—576.

Censures of the church, the power of the people in, V. 404, 405.

Ceremonies, complimentary, sinful wasters of time, III. 161—163; IV. 393, 394.

Certainty, objective, defined, XV. 33. Subjective certainty, *ibid.* A scheme of the kinds and degrees of certainty, 34. What are the certainties which must be known and held fast, and why, 35—42. Degrees of certainty, 42—45. Extremes to be avoided in judging of moral certainty, 45—47. Our certainty infallible, and in a degree physical, maintained against Peter Hurtado de Mendoza, 124—128.

Change of opinions easier than a change of heart and life, II. 95. On the change wrought in conversion. See *Conversion*, II.

Chaplains residing abroad, cases respecting, VI. 332—336. Directions to them, 344—348.

Charity, among believers, importance of cultivating, II. 118, 119, 122, 123. The grounds and motives to charitable works considered, VI. 476—479. Directions in the choice of charitable works, 480—483. The duty of setting apart a portion of our property for works of charity, 484, 485. What proportion should be appropriated, 485—496. Whether a man should give more in his lifetime or at his death, 496, 497. Impediments to works of charity, 498—503. Directions for such works, 503—507. The pleasure resulting from works of charity, X. 327—329. Charity destroyed by self-ignorance, XVI. 47. Distinction between charity and justice, XIX. 251, 252. The charity of the Christian religion, XXI. 172, 173.

Charles II.'s restoration, various circumstances in, a ground of thanksgiving, XVII. 181—185.

Chastisement, the displeasure of God to be regarded in, XII, 186.

Chastity, violations of, how punished anciently in Saxony, III. 444. Vows of chastity not easily to be dispensed with, IV. 11, 12. Whether it be lawful to break them and to marry, 36—38.

Chess-playing not fit for students, III. 624.

Children, general directions for the Christian education of, XIX. 489—495. Special motives for the holy education of them, IV. 105. Nature binds to it, 105—108. God requires it, 108. Parents are bound by the vows made when they dedicated their children to God in baptism, 108. Influence of holy education upon the whole of their subsequent lives, 109, 110. The advantages possessed by parents for this purpose, 110—112. The comfort of having holy children, 112—114. The great need which children have of every help their parents can afford them, 114—116. Directions for the education, &c. of children, 175—190; and for the right teaching of them,

270—281. Duties of children to their parents, 190; XIX. 205, 206, 497. To love, honour, and obey them, IV. 191—193. How long they are under their parents' command, 193, 194. To be content with their provision for them, 194. To submit to any labour that may be assigned to them, 195. To be thankful for instruction, *ibid.* Patiently to submit to their correction, *ibid.*, 196. To choose such company and such calling as they wish, 196. Not to marry without their parents' consent, 196, 197. To assist or support them when in want, 197. To imitate them in all that is good, *ib.*—199. The special duties of children towards God, 199—203; XIX. 498. Duties of children to one another, IV. 220—223; XIX. 499, 500. When their portions may be accounted too great, VI. 372. A short prayer for children, VII. 464—465. The bad education of children a hinderance of conversion, 295. Exhortation to those who have neglected their children, 295—297; and to children whose education has been neglected, 297. In what sense children are to be denied, XI. 204—210. Arguments and helps to patience under their sufferings and death, 409—411; and when the endeavours of parents in their behalf fail, 489, 490; or when they have bad children, 440, 441. How to live by faith towards children, XII. 516—520. The joyful state and blessing of good children to themselves, XV. 326—328; and to others, 328, 329. How punished for their fathers' sins, XIX. 175—177.

Children of God, special aggravations of the sins of, II. 249—251. Directions for loving the children of God, VI. 444—446. Love of them, as such, a mark of Christian sincerity, XXIII. 41—43.

CHRIST. See *JESUS CHRIST.*

Christendom, a moral prognostication of the changes that will be made in, in the golden age and time of true reformation and unity, XV. 429—447.

'*Christian Ethics*,' plan of the treatise on, II. v.—viii. 3, 4. Mr. Baxter's ends and uses in writing it, viii., ix. Objections to it answered, ix.—xv.

CHRISTIAN RELIGION, or *Christianity*:—Mr. Baxter's reasons for writing his 'Reasons of the Christian Religion,' XX. 443—447. His dedication of it to doubting and unbelieving readers, 448—451; and to hypocritical readers, 451—456.

I. *Of what the Christian Religion consists*, XXI. 147. Summary of its supernatural revelation, as contained in the Bible, 148—159. Summary of the things to be known and believed, 159—162. To be willed, desired, and hoped, 162; and to be done, 163, 164. Summary of Christian doctrine and practice, as contained in the creed, the Lord's prayer, and the ten commandments, 165, 166. The most concise statement of Christianity contained in the sacramental covenant of grace, 167.

II. *Nature and Properties of the Christian Religion briefly explained*, XIX. 54, 55. Its holiness and spirituality, XXI. 168, 169. Its purity, 169—171. No other religion reveals the nature of God, his works to man, and man's relations to him, as the Christian religion does, 171; or opens so wonderfully, magnifies, and reconciles God's justice and mercy to mankind, 172. Other important doctrines revealed by it, *ib.* No religion more charitable than this, *ib.*, 173. It is most for peace and unity of any religion in the world, 173. It is most exactly just, 174. The most excellent rule for government, 175; and the greatest strength of government, VI. 87—91. Promotes sincerity and condemns hypocrisy, XXI. 175. Contains all things necessary to happiness, 176. Tends to exalt the mind of man to the highest elevation of which it is capable, 177. Leads to the most joyful life of which human nature is capable on earth, *ib.* Forbids nothing but what is hurtful, and denies nothing which is truly for the good of man, *ib.*, 178. Contains the highest motives to piety, 178. Most strongly fortifies the mind against all temptations, *ib.* Affords the most powerful supports under suffering, 179; and against the fear of death, *ib.* Contains nothing contrary to any natural verity or law, *ib.* Has all the real evidence which the true parts of any other religion have, with the addition of much more supernatural evidence, 180. The style of Scripture, in which Christianity is contained, is plain and fit for all, and yet majestical and spiritual, suited to its high and noble end, *ib.* A view of the wisdom of God, as displayed in the Christian religion, XII. 103—112. Of his goodness and holiness, 112—118; and of his power, 119—127.

III. *Congruities in the Christian Religion, which make it more easily credible*, XXI. 181. The admirable concord between natural verity and the Gospel of Christ, *ib.*, 182. The actual state of the world is suitable to the Scripture character of it, as a world of sin, 182—187. Of temptation, 187, 188; and of calamity, 189, 190. The suitability of the law of grace revealed by Christ to our lapsed state, 191. The suitability of there being one universal head over mankind, 191, 192; of a mediator, to our lapsed state, 192; and of a divine teacher, to acquaint us with God and his will, *ib.*, 193. Who should, in our nature, rise from the dead, and ascend into heaven, 193, 194. The suitability of the means prescribed, whereby God would forgive and save sinners, 194. The suitability of the remedy for their peace and comfort, 195. Of the perfect example of Christ, as a teacher, *ib.* Of the Gospel covenant, and its conditions, 196. Its suitability to recover and quicken fallen man, 196, 197. The suitability of the Gospel commission to ministers, 197. Of the hope of mercy, by grace, through a Redeemer, *ib.* Of a high priest and justifier with God, to those who have Satan for their accuser, *ib.* Of a head, to whom departing souls can commit themselves, 198; and of a Saviour to an afflicted, persecuted people, *ib.*

IV. *Evidences of Christianity*, in what order to be studied, XII. 141, 142. Directions for studying them, 142—147. The main arguments for the truth of Christianity briefly stated, XX. 46—48.

1. *Direct Evidences*:—Of the witness of Jesus Christ, or the demonstrative evidence of his veracity and authority, XXI. 199, 200. Impossibility of any but God being the author of Christianity, XII. 139—141.

[i.] Antecedently, the witness of prophecy was a witness to Christ, XXI. 201—203; also prophetical types, 203, 204.

[ii.] The inherent constitutive witness to Christianity, the image of God visible in the doctrine and person of Christ, 206—213.

[iii.] The concomitant witness to Christianity, by the miraculous works of Christ and his disciples, 213—219. Christ's witness within us, XX. 131—137.

[iv.] The subsequent witness of the Spirit, XXI. 219—231. See *Witness of the Spirit*.

2. *Subservient Proofs* and reasons by which the foregoing evidences are brought to our certain knowledge, XXI. 241. How we know the antecedent prophetical testimony, and the constitutive inherent evidence, 242. How we know the concomitant testimony of miracles, by human testimony, *ibid.* By the evidence of natural certainty, *ib.*, 243. By the natural impossibility that the testimonies should be false, 243—257. Supernatural testimony to miracles in the holy lives and doctrine of those who wrote them, 258. In their uncontrolled miracles and gifts, which were wrought and possessed by multitudes, 258—261. In the wonderful success of their doctrine to the sanctification of men, 261—263. This proved by the most credible human testimony, and such as hath a natural certainty, 263. By the natural impossibility that such testimonies should be false, *ibid.* Particularly, that the reporters should be themselves deceived, or could deceive others, 263—271. Many miracles also were wrought by those first churches who witnessed the apostles' miracles, which is a divine attestation to their testimony, 272, 273. How the apostles, first Christians, and churches in succeeding ages, knew Christianity, XII. 128—130. By what signs the Christian religion has been transmitted to us, XX. 87—89. The certainty of that transmission, 89—92. The successive being of Christians and Churches, and preaching the word, with the administration of the sacraments and divine worship; disputes among Christians, their writings, confessions, and the decrees of synods, XXI. 273—276. How we receive Christianity infallibly, XII. 131—136. Proofs how we may certainly know the success of Christ's doctrine in the regeneration of his disciples, in times past, XXI. 277; and at the present time, 277—287.

3. *Collateral proofs* of the truth of Scripture from the actual agreement of the state of the world with the accounts therein delivered, XXI. 287, 288. From the depravity of human nature, 288, 289. From the spiritual conflict between the woman and the serpent's seed, 289. From the fact that there is no other religion in the world in which an impartial, rational man can rest, *ib.*, 290. From the

providences of God in behalf of his servants, 290—293. From the suitability of the Gospel to the actual state of all men, XV. 221—223; XXI. 293. From the brevity and plainness of its precepts, XV. 220, 221. Further collateral proofs of the truth of Christianity from the temptations of Satan and his contracts with witches, and the testimonies of persons possessed, XXI. 293, 294. From the testimony of enemies to the Christian faith, 294—301. The non-universality of Christianity no just ground of objection, 374.

V. *Difficulties* which faith has to overcome in receiving and believing the evidences of Christianity, XXI. 301. Difficulties in the things to be believed, 302—304. External adventitious impediments to the belief of the Christian faith, 304, 305; and internal impediments in the mind of man that must believe, 305, 306. Resolution of the intrinsical difficulties of the Christian faith, 307—358; and of the extrinsical difficulties, 358—377. The reasonable conditions required of them, who will overcome the difficulties of believing, and who will not undo themselves by wilful infidelity, 377—386.

VI. *Miscellaneous Observations on Christianity.*—The explained profession of the Christian religion, XIX. 574, 575. With what party of Christians we should join, seeing they are divided into so many sects, XXI. 395—398. The true interest of Christ and his church, 398—400. Means of extending Christianity, 408, 409. Impediments to its increase, 410, 411.

CHRISTIANS, definition of, XVI. 288, 289. Who in particular are to be deemed sincere and sanctified Christians, VI. 400. The society of experienced Christians to be cultivated as a means of grace, II. 50, 51. Directions to young Christians, or beginners in religion, for their establishment and growth, 89—169. Directions to Christians who are troubled with doubts respecting their sincerity and justification, IV. 344—350. Directions to declining or backsliding Christians, 350—378. The different degrees of true Christians, VIII. 381, 382. What graces and duties are requisite to constitute a complete Christian, XII. 363—390. The defects and distempers contrary thereto, 390—398. The causes thereof, 398—400. Inferences thence to be deduced, 400—405. When Christians are forsaken by all, they are not alone, for God is with them, XIII. 320. The advantages of their having God with them, *ibid.* How God is with them, 321—326. We cannot be Christians without self-acquaintance, XVI. 80—86. How Christians glorify God by their works, XVII. 192—194; and by what works, 195, 196. Description of a Christian who thus glorifies God, 196—227. Practical uses of this doctrine, 228—231. Directions to Christians for finishing their course with joy, XVIII. 83—85. The alleged ungodly lives of professing Christians, no valid objection against Christianity, XXI. 372—374. See *Believers, Confirmed Christians, Melancholy Christians, Warfare, Weak Christians.*

Christmas Day, remarks on the observance of, XVI. 502, 503.

CHURCH, different meanings of the word, XVI. 320, 321.

I. *Nature of the Church*:—Definition of a church, V. 247. How to know which is the true church among all pretenders, 248—253. Whether an uninterrupted succession, either of right ordination or of conveyance by jurisdiction, be necessary to the being of a true church, 276—280. Whether any form of church government is of divine institution, 373—379. What is determined in Scripture respecting it, and what not, 28. Whether any forms of churches and church-government, or any new church officers, may lawfully be invented and made by man, 380—395. The true nature of pastoral church-government, 395—397. Which is to be deemed a true, and which a false, church of Christ, VI. 401, 402. The church, why instituted, and what congregations form a church, XIX. 260.

II. *Church, Catholic or Universal*, defined, V. 248. The doctrine of the apostles' creed concerning it, explained, XIX. 92—96. Why termed 'Christ,' and 'the body of Christ,' XVI. 285. It is but one, II. 121; XVI. 286. Who are members of it, *ib.*, 287. [See *Members*, in this Index.] Nothing is to be taken as necessary to salvation or practice, which the universal church, in every age since Christ, did not receive, V. 149. No one Catholic church constituted by any head besides or under Christ, 280. Whether this Catholic church be visible, and what it is, 281. What constitutes a visible

member of this church, and who are to be accounted such, 282. What is requisite to prove a man to be a member of this church, *ibid.* 283—285. Danger of separating from the universal church, II. 119, 120. What are Christ's appointed means of the unity and concord of the universal church, V. 309—311. Who is the judge of controversies in the church, 311—315. Whether an unbaptized person, making public profession of Christianity, and the unbaptized infants of believers, are members of the visible church, 318, 319. Whether the universal church consists only of particular churches and their members, 370, 371. The trial, &c. of the laity, whether necessary to the admittance of a member into the universal church, 402—404. Arguments and helps to patience under the prosperity and triumphs of the wicked enemies of the church, XI. 507—509. Address to, and refutation of, the seekers and others who deny the very being of the catholic church, XVI. 300—303. Address to those who are perplexed, among contending parties, to know which is the true church, 303—307. Refutation of the Quakers who appropriate to themselves the catholic church, 308; also of the Anabaptists, *ibid.* 309; and particularly of the Papists, 309—317, 325—327. Expostulation to each of these parties, 317—319. The duty of cherishing a catholic love and compassion to every member of the catholic church, 361—365; and of making catholic endeavours for the good of all the members of the church, 366—369. See *Unity* (*Catholic*).

III. *Church, National or Political*, defined, V. 248. 266. 391. Whether the true calling of the minister by ordination, election, &c., be necessary to the essence of the church, 266—268. How far necessary, XIX. 143.

IV. *Particular Church* defined, V. 251. What constitutes one, 252, 253. 389. What is requisite to a man's reception to membership in a particular church, in addition to his title to membership of the universal visible church, 285—287. Must the church be first called by the pastor, or congregate themselves, and then choose their pastor, 371. In what respects a particular church differs from the consociation of many churches, 371, 372. Whether a particular church may consist of more assemblies than one, or they must all necessarily meet in one place, 372. Whether the trial, judgment, or consent of the laity is necessary to the admittance of a member into a particular church, 402—404. May a person be a pastor or member of a particular church, who lives so far from it as to be incapable of personal communion with them? 405, 406. Various cases of excommunication from a particular church considered, 442—445. Whether we may continue in a church where some ordinance of Christ is wanting, 455, 456. Whether the pastors may remove from one church to another at the magistrate's command, 458—460. A corrupted church, how to be reformed, 462, 463. Import of the expression, 'Church in a House,' XIV. 361—363. A particular church may be a true church, though much disordered, 479.

V. *Church of England*:—Rubric in the liturgy of, respecting confirmation, explained, V. 333.

VI. *Church of Rome*, falsely called Catholic or Universal, V. 254. Not a true church of Christ's institution, but a human, sinful policy, *ib.* 255. Whether the Romish clergy are true ministers of Christ, 256—261; and their baptism and ordination are nullities, 261, 262. Whether her head is antichrist, 262, 263. Whether members of the church of Rome are bound to separate from her, 265, 266. And whether it be lawful to go to their mass or worship, 266. The doctors of the Romish church not agreed what that church is which hath authority to determine matters of faith, XV. 56, 57. See *Papists, Pope, Popery*.

VII. *Church-Visible*, whether once confined to the Jews alone, V. 546, 547.

Church Assemblies, by whom to be appointed, V. 464. May they be omitted on the Lord's-day, if forbidden by the magistrate? 465. Whether they may be held where there is no minister, 539, 540. Directions for attending at them, 215—222.

Church Censures, the power of the people in, V. 404, 405.

Church Benefices, whether they may be sold, VI. 302, 303.

Church Confessions, various, uses of, V. 531. Advantage of them, 533. The lawfulness of subscribing them, 540, 541.

Church Covenant, whether necessary to the reception of a member into a particular church, V. 285, 286. Whether

baptism is the particular church covenant, 317, 318.

Church Divisions, caused by self-ignorance, XVI. 48—51. Other causes of them enumerated, XXI. 404, 405.

Church Government:—How much of it is plainly determined in Scripture, and how much not, V. 32. Whether any form of church-government is of divine institution, 373—378. Whether any sole form be of God's commanding, 379. And man may appoint any other form, 380—386. The true nature of pastoral church-government, 395—397. Whether any, and what part of it may be performed by a layman, 397—399.

Church Keys, the pastoral power of, XIX. 141.

Church Lands and utensils, whether holy, and what reverence is due to them, as holy, V. 569, 570.

Church Members. See *Members*.

Church Music, lawfulness of, V. 499—501.

Church Tunes, of man's invention, the lawfulness of, V. 497, 498.

Churches, a moral prognostication of what shall befall the churches on earth till their concord, by the restitution of their primitive purity, simplicity, and charity, XV. 403—428; and how that restitution is likely to be made, 429—447.

Cicero, testimonies of, to the immortality of the soul, XXI. 505—509.

Clemens Alexandrinus, testimony of, to the observance of the Lord's-day, XIII. 388, 389.

Clergy (Romish), whether to be taken for true ministers of Christ, V. 257—261. Whether their baptism and ordination are nullities, 261, 262.

Clerks, duty of, in public worship, V. 438.

Clothes. See *Apparel*.

Cohabitation, the mutual duty of husbands and wives, IV. 119, 120.

Comeliness, how to be denied, XI. 280, 281.

Comfort, Spiritual. See *Peace of Conscience*.

Commandments, the ten, VII. 469, 470. Observations thereon, XIX. 158—164. Explanation of the first, 164—171. Of the second, 171—178. Of the third, 179—185. Of the fourth, 185—196. Proofs that the fourth of these commandments does not bind us to the seventh-day Sabbath, XIII. 417, 418. How far it is moral, 426—428. Explanation of the fifth commandment, XIX. 196—211. Of the sixth, 212—217. Of the seventh, 217—226. Of the eighth, 226—236. Of the ninth, 236—244. Of the tenth, 244—253.

Commands of God, not all universal nor particular, V. 33, 34. How to exercise faith upon God's commandments for duty, XII. 224—232.

Commemoration, sacramental, in the Lord's supper, explained, XIX. 280, 281.

Commission, sins of, greater than sins of omission, II. 346—348.

Commodities, value of, how to be estimated, VI. 307, 308. How far they may be kept, in the case of a foreseen dearth, 308. May a seller dispraise the commodities of another in order to draw the buyer to his own? 312. If the buyer lose the commodity between the bargain and the payment, what the seller is to do in his relief, 513.

Common Prayer of the church of England, Mr. Baxter's testimony to, XVII. 5.

Communion, of the Lord's supper. See *Lord's Supper*.

Communion of Christians and churches, in what it consists, V. 153, 154. How far Christians are bound to communion with any other church or person, 154, 155. Directions respecting communion with holy souls departed and now with Christ, 223—235; and respecting our communion with holy angels, 235—245. Church communion may be allowed to Anabaptists holding no other error, 365, 366. The communion of saints valued as a means of grace to the converted, VII. 63—67. Communion with the whole church one of the benefits of conversion, 202—205. The pleasure of communion with Christ and his church in the Lord's supper, X. 316—323. Twenty intolerable mischiefs, resulting from admitting all into church communion, XIV. 482—500. By what measures we are to judge of the knowledge necessary to church communion, XV. 209—218. The doctrine of the apostles' creed concerning the communion of saints explained, XIX. 96—102.

Communion-Table, whether it may be turned altar-wise, and we may communicate there, V. 495.

Company to be cautiously chosen, II. 145. Temptations arising from company, 147—150, 281. Directions against them, 281. The company of lively Christians to be sought, 523. Caution against hardening company, 525. Vain and sinful company, a

waste of time, III. 164, 165. New company usually follows a new heart, VII. 114, 115. Bad company a hinderance to conversion, 252—254. Directions for the choice of contrary company, 254, 255. Vain company must be denied, XI. 182—184.

Compassion, Catholic and Christian, nature and extent of, XVI. 365.

Compliments. See *Ceremonies*.

Conception, miraculous, of Jesus Christ, explained, XIX. 71, 72. And vindicated, XX. 438. XXI. 335—337.

Concord among Christians, texts enforcing, V. 169, 170. Benefits of, 170—174. *Perfect* concord, why not to be expected upon earth, XVI. 329—331. The hinderances of Christian concord stated, 331—369.

Concupiscence, directions against, III. 273, 274.

Conference, holy, directions for, IV. 224—229; XIX. 526, 527. Motives to Christian conference, VI. 246—253. Directions for it, 254—257. The pleasantness of conference with Christian friends, X. 323—327.

Confession of Sin, with godly sorrow, an effect of conversion, VII. 51—55. A mean of grace, II. 49, 50. In what case it is a duty to confess wrongs to those whom we may have injured, VI. 507. What causes will excuse such confession, 508. Whether a secret (but unexecuted) thought or purpose to wrong another, is to be confessed, *ib*. To whom and in what cases confession is to be made, *ib*. 509. Directions about confessing sin to others, 509, 510; XIX. 101.

Confessions of Faith, various, uses of, V. 531. Advantages of them, 533. The lawfulness of subscribing them, 540, 541.

Confidence, caution against, in our first apprehensions or opinions, II. 127—129. Confidence in early-contracted prejudices, a cause of falsely-pretended knowledge, XV. 156, 157.

CONFIRMATION.

I. *Confirmation, or the solemn investiture of church privileges to persons baptized in infancy*, on their personal profession, why so termed, XIV. 451. Ministerial imposition of hands in confirmation, a lawful and convenient ceremony, anciently used in the church; yet not so necessary but that it may be dispensed with, for scrupulous consciences, 452. 469. In thus receiving baptized persons, their lives must be inquired after, which must be such as do not confute their profession, 469—471. An open profession not necessarily to be made in order to confirmation and admittance, 471, 472. Those who were never ministerially and explicitly approved as church members, but who have been permitted to join in church ordinances, without such approbation, are approved and confirmed members, 479. The mischiefs of admitting all into church communion, without confirmation, 480—500. The benefits resulting from the general practice of confirmation a motive for its adoption and speedy and vigorous execution, 501—521. Twenty objections against confirmation stated and refuted, 521—541. The duties incumbent upon all for the execution of this work, 542. Particularly of ministers, 543—547. Of the people, 547—550. And of magistrates, 551—562. Explanation of the rubric in the Liturgy of the Church of England, V. 333; XIV. 507, 508. Dr. Hammond's opinion on confirmation, 593, 594.

II. *Confirmation in a state of Grace*, nature of, VIII. 272—275. The necessity of seeking it, with twenty motives for seeking it, 275—320. Directions for seeking confirmation in a state of grace, 321—370.

Confirmed Christian, characters of:—He lives by faith and not by sight, VIII. 382. Has cogent reasons for his religion, 384. Has a clear sight of the integral truths of Christianity, 386. To which he cleaves from the Spirit of Christ, 387. He serves God not from fear, but love, 388. Reasons why he loves God supremely, 390. He takes this love and its expressions for the heart of his religion, 392. Has absolutely put his soul and all his hopes upon Christ as his Saviour, 393. Takes Christ alone as his teacher sent from God, 394. His repentance is universal, 396. He loves the light, as it shows him his sin and his duty, 397. Desires the highest degree of holiness, 399. Lives upon God and heaven as the end, reward, and motive of his life, 401. Counts no care or pains too great for obtaining it, 402. Daily practises self-denial, 405. Mortifies his fleshly desires, 408. Prefers the means of his holiness and happiness before all provisions for the flesh, 410. Is crucified to the world, and the world to him, by the cross of Christ, 411. Foresees the end in all his ways, 413. Lives upon God

alone, without regarding the favour of men, 415. Has absolutely devoted himself to God, 417. Readily obeys, and quickly submits his will to the will of God, 419. Delights more in God, and heaven, and Christ, and holiness, than in all the world, 420. Is conscious of his own sincerity, and assured of his justification, and title to everlasting joys, 424. Much assurance increases his love and holy diligence, 425. He abhors pride, and is low in his own eyes, 426. Exercises constant watchfulness, 428. Has counted the cost of salvation, and is ready to forsake all for Christ, 429. Would be true to Christ, though all should forsake him, 432. Can digest the hardest truths of Scripture, and the hardest passages of God's providence, 434. Can exercise all his graces in harmony, and is more in-getting and using grace, than in inquiring whether he have it, 435. Studies duty more than events, 436. Is more regardful of his duty to others than of theirs to him, 437. Keeps up a constant government of his thoughts and passions, 439. And also of his tongue, 441. Converses chiefly on heart-work and heaven-work, 442. He lives on the common and great substantials of religion, and yet will not deny the smallest truth, or commit the smallest sin, for any price that man can offer, 443. Highly esteems, and carefully redeems, time, 447. It is his daily business and delight to do good, 448. Loves his neighbour as himself, 449. Has a special love to all godly Christians as such, 450. Forgives injuries, and loves his enemies, 452. Does as he would be done by, 453. Is faithful in his outward calling, 455. Is very conscionable in the discharge of all relative duties, 456. Is the best subject, whatever may be the character of his rulers, 457. His trust in God overcomes the fear of man, 462. Judgment and zeal conjunct are his constitution, 464. Can bear the infirmities of the weak, 466. Highly esteems Christian unity, 468. Seeks the unity of the church upon peaceable principles, 475. Is of a peaceable spirit, 480. Highly regards the interest of God, and the salvation of men, 484. Is usually hated for his holiness by the wicked, 488. Though he abhor ungodly ministers, yet he reverences their office as necessary, 489. Though he greatly desireth lively affections and gifts, yet he much more values the essential parts of holiness, 492. Has great experience of the providence, truth, and justice of God, to fortify him against temptations to unbelief, 491. He is all his life seriously preparing for death, as if it were at hand; and especially longs for the blessed day of Christ's appearing, 493—496.

Conflict of Christ with Satan, nature of, XX. 326, 327. Character of the armies, 323—326. Of Christ's officers, soldiers, and their arms, 358, 359. Christ's personal conflicts and conquests developed, 330—352. What helps and encouragements he gives to his followers, 352—354. Practical uses of this doctrine, 375—377. Directions for carrying on this conflict successfully, 377—379.

Conjugal love, directions for maintaining, IV. 116—119.

Consanguinity, various cases of marriage within the prohibited degrees of, considered, IV. 32—36.

Conscience defined, IV. 96; VI. 96—98. Whether it is to be always obeyed by every man, II. 337—339. Human laws, how far obligatory upon conscience, VI. 69. How far the laws of men, especially smaller and penal laws, are binding on the conscience, 96—103. Directions how to live by faith in troubles of conscience, XII. 490—505. Want of a tender conscience, one of the causes of falsely pretended knowledge, XV. 154. See *Peace of Conscience*.

Consideration, serious, wrought in conversion, VII. 25, 26. It is not to be hindered, II. 25—27. The force of consideration in heavenly meditation, XXIII. 340—342.

Contemplative life defined, III. 211, 212. Whether every man is bound to it, 212. Whose duty it is, 212—214. How far persons in active life are to use contemplation, 214. Rules for this purpose, *ib.*—218.

Contemplation (heavenly). See *Meditation*, II.

Contracts, various cases of conscience respecting justice in, VI. 289—306. and respecting lusory contracts, 328—330.

Contradictions, alleged to exist in Scripture, one cause of infidelity, XXII. 205. The Scriptures vindicated from the charge of being contradictory, XXI. 347—349. Obser-

vations on them, XXII. 205—207. Inability to reconcile them, or the seeming impossibilities of Scripture, no just ground of unbelief, 207, 208. No contradiction in the doctrine of the Trinity, 439. The truth of seeming contradictory passages proved, XX. 27—29. Alleged contradiction in Gen. i. refuted, XXI. 329, 330. Reconciliation of Matt. xii. 30, with Luke ix. 49, 50, XX. 216, 217. And of Mark xiv. 30, with Matthew and Luke, 439, 440. The contradiction alleged to exist in Matt. i. 8, 9, explained and refuted, XXI. 547. Alleged contradictions in the narrative of the resurrection, 548—550.

Controversies in religion not to be studied too early, II. 99. The evil of them to young beginners, 99, 100. Directions how to act when controversies occasion divisions, 130—134. When they are to be decided by antiquity, V. 147. And when by the experience of later ages, *ib.*, 148. Directions for the discovery of truth in controversies, 148—151. Who is the judge of controversies in the church, 311—315. And in matters of faith or worship, VI. 53, 54. Who is to be obeyed when the magistrate and minister differ thereon, 56—59. The Romish doctrine of an infallible judge of controversies refuted, XVI. 354—358; XXII. 214—216. Directions for tranquillizing the minds of those who are perplexed by controversies, XVII. 261—265; XIX. 424—432. Whether he who has most of the witness within is not most likely to be in the right in particular controversies, XX. 178—180. The advantage of having that witness, in particular controversies, 180—182.

Conventicles:—Whether religious and private meetings, forbidden by the magistrate, are to be deemed such, V. 572—574.

Conversation in heaven, what, II. 457. Signs of pride in conversation with our fellow-men, III. 29—45. General rules for an upright conversation, VI. 3—13. We may safely take counsel with him whose conversation is in heaven, XXIII. 248—251. No one so highly honours God, as he whose conversation is in heaven, 251.

Converse with God in solitude, XIII. 335—353. Directions for conversing with God:—Be reconciled to him in Christ, 353, 354. Depend wholly on the mediation of Christ, 354. Take heed of bringing a particular guilt into the presence of God, 355. Bring no idols in your hearts, *ib.* Live by faith, 356—358. Watch your own hearts, 358.

CONVERSION:—Design of Mr. Baxter in writing his treatise on conversion, VII. viii.—xii. The difference between conversion, repentance, regeneration, sanctification, and vocation, explained, 19—22. Brief explanation of the doctrine of conversion, XIX. 332—340, 394—414.

I. *Nature of Conversion*, and its Author, VII. 23. The means and the subject of conversion, *ib.* 24.

II. *The several parts of Conversion*, 24.

1. It is a *change of mind*, from ignorance, by illumination, VII. 24, 25. From inconsiderateness to sober consideration, 25, 26. From unbelief to true believing, 26—28. By healing their errors about God, and the necessary matters of salvation, 28—32.

2. It is a *change of the heart or will*—Which has a new inclination and complacency, VII. 32—38. New intentions or ends, 38—44. New choice of means, 44—67. New resolutions, 67—71. New affections, 71—87. It makes men become as children in humility, teachableness, and beginning the world anew, 87—98.

3. It *changes the life*, VII. 98. Which begins with a holy covenant with God, 98—103. The forsaking of all sin, 104—109. The converted man has other work to do, 109—111. He has a new tongue, 111—113. And a change of company ordinarily, 114, 115. Conversion makes a man compassionate to the unconverted, 115—119.

4. Self-denial is one part of true conversion. Concerning which see *Self-denial*.

III. *Salvation proved to be for the converted only*:—from the express words of Scripture, VII. 120—122. By scripture reasons, 122—129. Practical uses of this doctrine, 141—161.

IV. *Benefits of Conversion*:—Deliverance from the power of Satan, VII. 190—193. Union to Christ, 193—195. Becoming a member of the true church of Christ, 195. Pardon of all sin, 195—197. Reconciliation to God, 197. Adoption as the sons of God, 198. Having the Spirit of Christ, 199. The promises are

theirs, 199, 200. All duties are pleasing to God, 200, 201. Angels attend them, 201, 202. Communion with the whole church, 202—205. Christ's intercession, 205—208. All things co-operate for their good, 208—210. The converted are in a safe state to die, 210, 211. They are heirs of everlasting glory, which they shall possess, 211—218. No evil can befall them, 218—222. The further they go, the greater their happiness, 222—225. Conversion makes them useful to others, 225, 226. It affords joy to angels, 226. And to the Son of God himself, 227, 228. Persuasion to conversion, founded on the preceding considerations, 228—230. And an exhortation, 230—250.

V. *Hinderances of Conversion*:—With directions contrary to them, VII. 251. Wilful neglect of means of grace, 251—262. Bad company, 262—265. Gross ignorance of those truths which should be the means of conversion, 265—270. Unbelief, 270—272. Inconsiderateness, 272—274. Hardness of heart, 274—283. The great esteem and interest of the world, 283—286. Custom in sin, subduing reason to the flesh, 286—288. Foolish self-love, which causes men to cherish presumption and false hopes, 288—290. Counterfeit graces, or half-conversion, which occasions self-deceit, 290. Living among strong temptations and occasions of sin, 291, 292. The scandalous lives of the professors of religion, 292—295. The ill education of children, 295—297. Striving against the Spirit of grace, 297, 298. Unresolvedness and half purposes, 298, 299. Delay, 300—302. When good beginnings are not followed on, 302—304. Misunderstanding of Scripture, and erroneous thoughts concerning the ways of God, 304—323. A proud, unteachable frame of spirit, 323, 324. Wilful obstinacy, 324, 325.

VI. *Directions and persuasions to a sound Conversion*:—Directions to sinners under the work of conversion, that it miscarry not, VIII. 7—20. Labour for a right understanding of the true nature of Christianity, and the meaning of the Gospel that must convert, 21—25. Search the Scriptures daily, whether those things are so, 25—30. Seriously consider the truths you understand and believe, 30—61. See that the work of humiliation be thoroughly done, 61—94. Close with the Lord Jesus, as he is revealed in the Gospel, 94—144. See that the flesh be thoroughly mortified, and the heart taken off from worldly objects, 144—147. Make an absolute resignation of self to God, 147—155. Mistake not change of opinion and outward profession and behaviour for a true, saving change, 155—169. Acquaint yourselves by faith with the glory of the everlasting kingdom, 169—173. Account not yourselves converted until God and holiness have your very love, desire, and delight, 173—181. If you would not have the work of conversion miscarry, turn, without further delay, 181—209. Stop not in weak, wavering purposes, and faint attempts, but be firmly resolved, 209—242.

VII. *Directions to the Converted*:—against puzzling difficulties in religion, XIX. 415, 416. Against melancholy and perplexing fears, 416—419. Against doubting their sincerity, 419. Against carnal security, 420, 421. Against sensuality, pride, and covetousness, 421—424. Against temptations occasioned by sects, divisions, and controversies, 424—432. And by the thought why God will damn so many in hell, 433, 444. Against mistaking the nature of the Christian religion, and mutilating it, by minding some parts and overlooking the rest, 445, 446. Against giving way to a customary coldness and formality in religion, 446, 447. And against temptations to doubt the truth of Christ, the Scripture, or the life to come, 447—457.

Corbet (Rev. John), Funeral Sermon on, XVIII. 162—184. His character, 185—189. Practical lesson deduced from his example, 189—192.

Correction of children, to be used with discretion, IV. 187, 188. Rules for it, 188. To be submitted to by them, 195, 196.

Corruption, original and additional, of man's nature, ignorance of, a cause of falsely pretended knowledge, XV. 155, 156.

Councils, no true general ones, but those convened by imperial authority, V. 280. Observations on the councils of the Romish church, XV. 85—87. A general council not the universal governor of the church,

XIX. 139. Councils have no such power as the Apostles had, 137.
Counsellors, duties of, XVII. 374—376.
Cousins-german, marriage of not unlawful, IV. 33, 34. Their duty, when, after being married, they entertain doubts of the lawfulness of their marriage, 34.
Covenant (Christian), defined, V. 39. The parties to it, *ib.*, 40. The matter of it on God's part, 40; and on man's part, *ib.*, 41. What are the terms of it proposed by God, and where, 41, 42. The necessary qualifications of it, on man's part, 42, 43. Its fruits and benefits, 43. Its special reasons, *ib.*, 44. The baptismal covenant explained, 44—47. Of renewing the covenant, 47, 48. Who are sincere in the Christian covenant, XVI. 161—163.
Covenant of grace, heartily to be consented unto, II. 43, 44. Direction for the present performance of it, 44—48. Sum of the covenant of God with man, 200. The baptismal covenant, how to be explained to children and servants, IV. 273—275. Heads of it, V. 526. In what manner a truly-converted man will covenant with God, VII. 101—103.
Covenant (Church). See *Church Covenant*.
Coventry, inhabitants of, dedication of the third part of 'The Saint's Rest' to, XXII. 359.
Covetousness described, III. 70, 71. The malignity of this sin, 71, 72; and its worst sorts, XIX. 251. What counterfeits of the contrary virtue hide this sin from the eyes of worldlings, III. 74—77. What false appearances of covetousness cause many to be unjustly suspected of it, 77—79. Directions and cautions against it, 79—94.
Coxe (Mrs. Mary), funeral sermon on the death of, XVIII. 91—100. Her character, 101—105. Practical improvement of it, 105—112.
Coxe (Dr. Thomas), dedication to, of Mrs. Coxe's funeral sermon, XVIII. 89, 90. Address to him and to his children, 107—110.
Creation, the works of, to be regarded with faith, XII. 181—183. Catechetical history of the creation, XVIII. 528—531; and explanation of it, XIX. 66, 67. The creation of all things out of nothing, vindicated from infidel objections, XX. 434.
Creature, vanity and vexation of, a motive to the love of God, II. 372, 373. Helps for discovering the sinful love of, III. 262—264; and for mortifying it, 264—268. How far swearing by creatures is sinful, 493, 494. Whether any and what degree of religious worship may be given to a creature, V. 468—472.
Credibility of history, observations on, XIII. 376—378. Of the Gospel, briefly proved, XIX. 41—53. Proved from the character of the spectators, who were not deceived themselves, XVIII. 436. Nor were the Apostles and Evangelists deceived by others, 436—438. Nor are we deceived by any false historical tradition, 438—443. The credibility of the Scripture history vindicated from all objections, XXI. 358—363.
Creed of profane men, heads of, II. 156, 157.
Creed of the Apostles, VII. 469. Its use and authority, V. 528. Whether really of the Apostles' framing, *ib.*, 529; XV. 68, 69. Their practice imitated by the churches, V. 530. Observations on the omission of the clause respecting Christ's descent into hell, by Mr. Baxter and others, XIV. 380—386; and on the ancient Western creed, 386—390. Catechetical explanation of the Apostles' creed, XIX. 61—121. Brevity of the ancient creeds, XXIII. 143, *note* [t].
Cross, the sign of, in baptism, whether to be received in any case, V. 366. See *Crucifying*, *Glorying*.
Crosses, external, directions to persons labouring under, IX. 25, 26.
Crucifying of the World by the Cross of Christ:—What is *not* the crucifying of the world, by way of caution, IX. 344—349. In what respects the world must be crucified to us, as to the object, 349—362; and as to our acts, 363—374. How we are to be crucified to the world, 375. The difference between this and natural death, *ib.* Our undue estimation of the world must be crucified, 376; also our inordinate agitations, 378; and our affections, *ib.* Particularly our love to the world, *ib.*; our desires, 379; expectations, *ib.*, 380, 381; and our delight in the world, 381, 382. The contraries to those affections must be crucified, as displicency and hatred, &c., 382—385. Our inordinate labour for the world must be crucified, 386. Plausible objections to this stated and refuted, 387—389. How the cross of Christ doth crucify the world, 381. How it

is done by the cross as suffered by Christ, 389—393; how by the same cross believed in and considered, 393—395. And how by the cross which we suffer, in obedience and conformity to Christ, 395—399. The absolute necessity of being crucified to the world, and the world to us, 399—402. Uses of this doctrine, 402. *First*, to inform us that it is the use of the cross of Christ to crucify the world, 406—411; and that wherever the cross of Christ is effective, the world is crucified, 412—414. *Secondly*, what it is to be a Christian indeed, and at what a distance real Christians are from the world, 414—456. *Thirdly*, a use of exhortation, especially to gentlemen, 456—483. Directions for successful crucifying the world, 483. Make use of the cross of Christ hereto, 483. Receive not a false picture of the world, but think of the creature truly as it is, 486. Crucify the flesh, which is the master-idol, 489. Keep your minds intent on the greater things of everlasting life, 491. Understand the right use of the creatures, and employ them accordingly, 492. Keep sensible of the enmity of the world, and of your danger, 495. Be much in the house of mourning, 496. Study to improve afflictions, *ib.* Be very suspicious of prosperity, and be more afraid of the smiling than of the frowning world, 497. Keep it under mortifying means by keeping a constant guard upon the senses, 505. And thoughts, 506—508. Make not worldly-minded men your companions, 508. *Fourthly*, a use to the sanctified, to use the world as a crucified thing, by seeking it only as a means to higher things, and not for itself, 511. Be not too eager for it, 513. Suffer it not to crucify you with cares and sorrows, 515. Let it not thrust out God's service, nor be made an excuse for negligence in religion, *ib.* Use no unlawful means to get the world, 518. Improve ill for good, 521. *Fifthly*, a use of consolation, with the benefits of being crucified to the world, 536—551.

Curiosity, presumptuous, in inquiring into the secret things of God, to be avoided, XII. 172—174.

Custom, in sinning, a hinderance of conversion, II. 286, 287. Direction against it, 287, 288.

Customs, the evading of the payment of, is a violation of the eighth commandment, XIX. 232.

D.

Damned, time, how esteemed by them, III. 142, 143. Directions against temptation, caused by the thought why God will damn so many in hell, XIX. 433—444. Objections against the number of the damned being inconsistent with the goodness of God, XXI. 322—328. And against those who live honestly and soberly, and do nobody any harm, being damned, 330. Most of the world not damned by God's will, without any remedy, 557—572.

Dancings, what opinion to be formed of them, III. 622.

Danger, sinfulness of apprehending, IX. 124—129.

David, Psalms of, lawfulness of using them, V. 496. How they are to be used, 497.

'Day of Grace' defined, III. 533. Whether it may be said to be past, 334, 335. Is never past in this life, VI. 520.

DEATH, in what consists a readiness for, XIX. 540. How much it is our interest, 540—542. It is our chiefest work, 542, 543. Directions for a preparation for death, 287—292. Particularly in health, 543—558. And in sickness, 558—564. Directions for a comfortable and peaceful death, IV. 416—420; XVIII. 7—9. Observations on death-bed repentance, IV. 411, 412. The death of relations, whether good or bad, how to be borne, 449. Considerations against inordinate grief for the death of relations, 450, 451. Answer to the doubts of those who fear death, XI. 264—266. Directions to be willing to die, 267—273. Arguments and helps against inordinate fears of death, 402—405. Directions how to die by faith, XII. 574—578. Self-ignorance causes men to neglect preparation for death, XVI. 55. Death the last enemy to be destroyed, XVII. 527. How it is an enemy to nature, 529, 530. To the soul, 530, 531. And to the work of grace, 531—537. Yet it is an enemy which will be destroyed, 538. It is conquered meritoriously by Christ's death, *ib.* Who conquered death by his resurrection, 538, 539. By the gift of his justifying and sanctifying grace, 539. Antidotes against the enmity of death:— *First*, Saving faith, *ib.*, 540. *Secondly*, The par-

don of our sins and the justification of our persons by the blood and merits of Christ, 541. *Thirdly*, The holiness of the soul, 541—543. *Fourthly*, The gift of the Holy Ghost as the Comforter of the saints, 543—545. Death itself advantages our felicity, 545, 546. It will be perfectly conquered at the resurrection, 546, 547. Uses of this subject, 547—595. Directions for overcoming the fear of death, 562—576. Consolation to fearful, doubting souls, 579—588. Points of resemblance between death and the separation of a minister from his charge, XVIII. 196—199. Points of dissimilarity between them, 199, 200. It does not annihilate the soul, 263. The great change effected by death, XIX. 529, 530. Benefits of meditating upon death to ministers, 533, 534. And to others, 534—538. The sinfulness of being unwilling to die, XXIII. 191, 192. Infidelity of it, 192. It betrays the coldness of our love, 194, 195. And that we are not weary of sinning, 195, 196. It shows an insensibility of the vanity of the creature, 197—199. Our dissimulation, 199, 200. Remedies against unwillingness to die, 200—212. Answers to objections, 213—217. Our summons to die, the fittest season for meditation, 328—331.

Debts, various cases of conscience respecting the forgiving of, solved, VI. 154—158.

Decalogue, observations on, XIX. 158—160. Explanation of the preface to it, 160—164. And of the ten precepts of which it consists, 164—253. The lawfulness of kneeling at the reading of, considered, V. 440. How far binding upon us, XIII. 420. How far the fourth commandment of it is of perpetual obligation, 426, 427. Whether every word in the decalogue be of the law of nature, and whether all that was of the law of nature, was of the decalogue, 504—507.

Decays of grace to be diligently watched against, II. 157.

Deceit by action, how far lawful, III. 531. And also the deceiving of another by speech, 512, 513. Whether children, servants, or subjects, being in danger, may use deceit to conceal their faults, 533. Directions for escaping deceit in matters of religion, V. 134—151. Whether *all* deceiving of another is sin, XIX. 240.

Declining in religion, different sorts and degrees of, IV. 351—356. Signs of it, 356—360. Directions to decliniug Christians, 360—370. And for preventing declension, 371—378.

Defamation. See *Slandering*.

Defence of truth against error, directions for, V. 139—151.

Deformed persons, how far they may hide their deformity by their clothing, III. 629—630.

Degrees of consanguinity, prohibited, for marriage, XIX. 225.

Delay, a hinderance of conversion, VII. 300. Caution against it, *ib.*, 301.

Delight in God, nature of, II. 408, 409. How much of it is to be hoped for on earth, 409. Directions for delighting ourselves in God, 409—421.

Demoniacs, why probably numerous in the time of Christ, XX. 211, 212. The circumstances of Christ's healing one explained, 212—216.

Departing to be with Christ, XVIII. 253. Necessity of believing this doctrine, 254. Its certainty manifested, 260—298. How believers depart, in order to be with Christ, 306. They depart from body and life, yet it is far better to do so, *ib.* From all the fleshly pleasures of this life, yet best, 310. From the more manly delights of knowledge and books, 313. Of sermons, 318. Of friends and conversation, 319. Of God's word and worship, 321. Of Theology, 322. Of notice of the affairs of the world, 329. From our service to the living, 331. Why such departing is to be preferably chosen, 337. It is better, as it is the fulfilling of God's will, and as tending to the perfection of the universe and the church, 338. It is better to the individual as respects his own felicity, 339. This proved by general reasons from the efficients and means, 340. The final reasons, 344. The constitutive reasons from the state of the believer's intellect, both as to the intuitive manner of knowledge, and as to the matter of that knowledge, 349. He will know God better, and also his works, 357, 358. And Jesus Christ, 359. And the church triumphant, 360. And all God's word, 362. Also God's present work of providence, 363. The nature and worth of mercies, *ib.* Himself, body and soul, 364. And his fellow-creatures, 366. From what evils and dangers he was delivered, 367. He will also be freed

from temptations of the flesh, the world, and the devil, 368. There will be nothing in his will against God, his neighbours, or himself, *ib.* His will will be conformed to God's will, 370. He will behold God's glorious image in the perfection of God's image, 372. And the church triumphant, including Jesus Christ, the angels, and holy souls, 373—389. And there will be better work in heaven than here, 389—394.

Deriding of godliness, directions against, III. 557—577.

Desire, sinful, how to be ascertained, III. 268. Directions against it, 269—277.

Despair or *desperation* defined, III. 329; IX. 114, 115. In what cases a duty, III. 329. When sinful, 329, 330. Directions against sinful despair, 330—344. What is commonly called desperation in Christians, shown not to be so, IX. 115—120. Arguments and helps to patience under temptations to despair, XI. 450—460.

Devil, or *Satan*, proofs of the existence of, from his temptations, XXII. 319, 320. From apparitions, 320—324. By possessions and dispossessions of evil spirits, 324—327. And by his contracts with witches, 327—329. Various appellations given in the Scriptures to the devil, II. 259, 260; XX. 337—339. The temptations whereby he hindereth men's conversion, stated, with the proper remedies against them, II. 62—98. How he works in the warfare against the soul, 261, 262. The Christian's arms against him, 262, 263. The matter and grounds of his temptations, 263—265. His succours and auxiliaries, and principal means, 265—268. What instruments used by him, 268—270. How he labours to keep off the forces of Christ, which should resist him, 271—274. Christ's methods against him, 274—276. Temptations by the devil to particular sins, with directions for preservation and remedy, 276—284. His method in applying his prepared baits, 285—309. And his temptations to draw us off from duty, 309—324. The activity of Satan, a motive for the redeeming of time, III. 140. Directions against the sinful fear of, 302—304. Deliverance from the power of Satan, a benefit of conversion, VII. 190—193. Answer to the question respecting the wickedness of the devil, XX. 432—434. See *Enmity*, II.

Dice, playing with, sinfulness of, III. 616—618. And for money, VI., 329, 330.

Diet, the proper measures of, for quality, quantity, and time, III. 387—392.

Difficulties in religion, not to discourage us, II. 108—113, 136, 137. Difficulties in Scripture, no bar to the reading of them, V. 535. Some causes of Scripture difficulties explained, XV. 59—62. Directions to the converted, against puzzling difficulties in religion, XIX. 415, 416.

Difference in judgment, in matters of religion, rules for conducting, IV. 134, 135. Duty of a wife in case of such difference with her husband, 155. The differences of the godly, not about essentials in faith or practice, XVI. 476—482. Refutation of the objection against Christianity, from the differences alleged to exist among Christians as to the rule of faith, XXI. 363, 364. And also concerning the reasons and resolution of their faith, 364, 365.

Diligence, excellency of, III. 605—607. Motives to it, 608—611.

Disagreements in matters of religion, address to those who complain of them, XVI. 371—378.

Disciples of Christ; how sorrow goeth before joy with them, XVIII. 201—209. Christ's death and departure, the cause of his disciples' sorrow, 209, 210. The sorrows of Christ's disciples, short, 210—218. They will be again visited by Christ, 219—225. Who will turn their sorrow into joy, 225—229. And their joy shall be such as no man can take from them, 229, 230.

Discipline in families, nature of, IV. 66, 67. In the church, how far Scripture is the law or rule of it, V. 27—29. What power the civil magistrate has in it, VI. 53, 54. Exhortation to the practice of ecclesiastical discipline, XIV. xxvii.—xxx. Necessity of enforcing it, xxx., xxxi. By whom it is to be performed, xxxii.—xxxvi. How it is to be administered, 105—114. Importance of discipline, 117, 118. Pretences alleged to justify the neglect of church discipline, 184—188. Answered 188—198. So much discipline to be exercised as is clearly

their duty, 242—245. See also *Minister*, IV. 4.
Discontent, remedies against, III. 269—277.
Discouragements in religion, three sorts of, II. 108, 109. Remedies against them, 110—113.
Discourse, edifying, motives to, VI. 246—253. Directions for it, 254—257. Wanton discourse to be denied, XI. 165—168.
Disobedience, sad effects of, a motive to obedience, II. 211, 212. The fruits of former disobedience to be remembered, 215.
Displeasure of God, the apprehension of, no punishment like it, a criterion of walking with God, XIII. 161, 162.
Disputation, rule for conducting it, for confuting error, and defending the truth, IV. 134, 135.
Dissensions between husbands and wives, directions for avoiding, IV. 123—127.
Distinctions, minute, in some of Mr. Baxter's works, his apology for, XV. 172.
Diversity, what, may exist among churches and Christians, without dissolving unity, V. 155, 156.
Divine, what it is to be truly so, II. 165. Whether divine things may be discoursed on, by those whose hearts are not sanctified, IV. 224—226.
Divines, sad effects of proud, unhumbled understandings upon, XV. 91—94.
Divinity, importance of understanding the method of, II. 97, 98. The question, Whether interest makes their judgment in the cause of faith more suspicious or more contemptible than other men's? answered in the negative, XXI. 590—593.
Divisions, what conduct to be pursued by believers when they arise, II. 130—134. The mischiefs of them, IV. 175. Christianity, in itself, not the cause of them, VI. 79—92. Falsely-pretended knowledge and faith, the great plague and divider of the Christian world, XV. 84—107. Directions to the converted against temptations occasioned by the existence of divisions, XIX. 424—432. Various causes of divisions, XXI. 404, 405. The divisions of professing Christians into sects, no valid objection, against Christianity, XX. 114, 115; XXI. 374, 375. See *Schism*.
Divorce:—Whether husband and wife may consent to be divorced and marry others, IV. 159. Is the party injured by the adultery of the other bound to divorce, or left free, 160. Is it the proper privilege of the man to put away an adulterous wife, or is it also in the woman's power to depart from an adulterous husband, *ib.*, 161. May the husband put away the wife without the magistrate, or the wife depart from the husband without a legal divorce, 161, 162. What is to be done if both parties commit adultery, 162. Or if one purposely commit adultery, in order to be divorced from the other, 163.
Doctrines, in what order to be preached, with their proofs, V. 121—130. Heads of doctrine, in which all Christians are agreed, 155. The doctrines of a future state, and of the Trinity, revealed in the Scriptures, a proof that they are from God, XXII. 318—335. Summary of the doctrines of Christianity, XXI. 159—162. The concise statement of the doctrines of Christianity contained in the sacramental covenant of grace, 167. The image of God visible in the doctrine of Christ, a proof of its truth, 209—213. Alleged difficulties in doctrine, no objection to Christianity, 355—357.
Doing as we would be done by, extent of the rule, VI. 289.
Dominicans, doctrine of, respecting a physical, efficient, immediate predetermination, obliterates all divine faith, XIII. 144, 145.
Dominion of God over us, duty of remembering, II. 203—207. On the saving knowledge of it, grounded on his creation and redemption, and the practical uses thereof, XIII. 114—120.
Doubting, causes of, among Christians, XXII. 505. The weakness and small measure of our grace, and its remedy, *ib.* Looking more at the present cause of comfort or discomfort, than at future happiness and the way to attain it, 506—508. The mistaking of assurance for the joy that sometimes accompanies it, 508. They know not the ordinary way of God's conveying these expected comforts, 508, 509. The expecting a greater measure of assurance than God usually bestows, 510. The taking up comforts in the beginning upon unsound or uncertain grounds, 510, 511. The imperfection of natural reason, 512. The secret maintaining of some known sin, 512—514.

Growing lazy in the spiritual part of duty, 514—516. The prevalence of melancholy, 516, 517. Whether doubting hinders the performance of a duty, II. 337. Doubts about salvation removed, IX. 116—120. How far a doubting person may rest in the judgment of a minister about the fate of his soul, XVI. 245—248.

Doubts respecting the prevalence of love to God or one's self, resolved, II. 483—493. Directions to those who are troubled with doubts respecting their sincerity and justification, IV. 342—350. Doubt and troubles caused by wilful disobedience, not to be removed but by the healing of that disobedience, IX. 139—141. The causes of doubting to be carefully distinguished from causes of mere humiliation and amendment, 219. Twenty ordinary doubts removed, 220—259. The Christian carefully to discern whether his doubts are such as must be cured by the consideration of general or special grace, 260—264. Directions how to live by faith, under doubts about our spiritual and everlasting state, XII. 490—504. Consolations to doubting souls against the fear of death, XVII. 579—588. Directions to the converted, against doubting the truth of Christ, the Scripture, or the life to come, XIX. 447—457.

Downame (Bishop), testimony of, to the use of the word, 'puritan,' XVII. 73.

Dreadfulness of God, and the effects of the knowledge thereof, XIII. 151—154.

Dreams, neither good nor sinful simply in themselves, III. 469. What renders them really sinful, 470. Directions against sinful dreams, 470—472.

Dress, inordinate attention to, a sinful waster of time, III. 159—161. See *Apparel*.

Drinking to excess, directions against, III. 430—436. Drinking of healths unlawful, 418. And to be avoided, 433.

Drunkenness defined, III. 399. Distinction between it and bibbing or tippling, 401—403. Causes thereof, 403—406. Its sinfulness, 406—414. Excuses for drunkenness exposed, 414—418. Questions proposed to drunkards, 419—430. Practical directions against drunkenness, 430—436. How far a drunken man is bound by a contract made when drunk, VI. 293, 294.

Duties of religion, not to be corrupted, II. 159, 160. Signs of pride in religious duties, III. 23—29. The temptations of Satan to draw us off from them, and remedies against such temptations, II. 309—314. And to frustrate holy duties, and make them ineffectual, 314—320. The duties of the converted pleasing to God, VII. 200, 201.

Duty, performance of, how far hindered by doubts, II. 337. Whether lawful to be performed by unlawful means, 341. Whether a certain duty is to be forborne for an uncertain sin, 342. Rules for the performance of duty, 345—351. A great duty not to be omitted, though there be a danger of committing a small sin in performing it, 346—348. Different degrees of duty to be ascertained, and the fittest season for doing it, III. 149. Importance of being provided for the performance of every duty which may occur, 154. Whether danger will excuse from duty, and when, V. 35, 36.

Dying men, time how valued by, III. 132. See *Death*.

E.

Ear, uses of, III. 363. Sins of it, *ib.* 364, 365. Danger of sinful use of the ear, 366. Directions for its government, 366—369.

Earth, the sin, folly, and danger of seeking our rest on, XXIII. 177—186. Experience shows that there is no rest upon earth, 186—191.

Eating, excessive, what is, and what is not, IV. 369—371. Its odiousness, 376—385. Directions and helps against excessive eating, 385—390. Rules for the measure of eating, 390—392.

Eden, situation of the garden of, XX. 435, 436.

Edifices, sumptuous, when they may or may not be erected, VI. 369.

Edifying discourse, materials for, IV. 227, 228.

Education, holy, of children, motives to, IV. 105—116. Directions to parents for educating their children, 175—190. Bad education of children a hinderance of conversion, VII. 295. Exhortation to avoid it, 295, 296.

Egyptian Sorcerers, pretended miracles of, examined, and disproved, X. 179.

Elder, duties of, to the younger, XV. 391, 392. And of the younger towards them, 392—397.

Elders, addressed by St. Paul in Acts, xx. 28. who they were, XIV. 46—50.

Election, mistakes respecting God's decree of, corrected, VII. 312—315. The act of God, V. 331. Whether the infants of the faithful are elected, *ib.* 332.

Elias, or Elijah, circumstances of his appearing, with Moses, at the transfiguration of Christ, considered, XVIII. 467—470. Of what things they discoursed, 470—477. The design of their appearance, 477, 478.

Enemy, who is to be accounted such, VI. 469. Directions for the forgiveness of enemies, 142—154. With what kind of love, and on what accounts, an enemy is to be loved, 469. And to what extent, 470. The question of self-defence against an enemy considered, and how far we may hurt him, 471, 472. Whether kings and states may love their enemies, 472. Motives to love and do good to our enemies, 472—474. Directions for this purpose, 474—476.

ENMITY.

I. *Enmity of Christ*:—His doctrine and works against Satan's kingdom, how it proves that Christ and his disciples performed their works solely by the power of God, XX. 253, 254. Proofs of Christ's enmity to Satan, from his nature, interest, design, and works, 319, 320. Illustration of the nature of this enmity, 321, 322. Two armies formed under two generals, 323—326. Nature of the conflict, 326, 327. Christ conquereth for us, when we suffer, 328, 329. Christ's personal conflicts and conquests, and enmity against Satan, developed, 330—352. What helps and encouragements he gives his followers, 352—354. His successes against Satan, 354—358. Character of the officers in his army, 358. Of his soldiers, 359. And their armour, *ib.* Christ alone successful against Satan, 360, 361. Practical uses of this doctrine, 375—377. Directions for carrying on the conflict successfully, 377—379.

II. *Enmity of Satan* against Christ and his disciples, proved from his nature, design, interests, and actions, XX. 254, 255. From his transactions with witches, 255—271. By possessions and other violence on the body, 271. By apparitions and voices, 272, 273. By his endeavours to bring the world to idolatry, with the success, 274—277. By his incessant endeavours to raise heresies, and by the power by which he animateth them, 277—287. By the introduction of Popery, 288—290. And of Mahometanism, 291, 292. By renewing heresies unto this day, 292—296. By stirring up church governors in England against learned and exemplary ministers, 296, 297. Kindling sects here, 298—300. Satan's enmity further proved by open persecutions by Jews, gentiles, heretics, and Papists, 301—311. By the inbred enmity in the hearts of all the servants of Satan throughout the world, against the kingdom and subjects of Christ, 311—314. By the resistance and obstinacy against all means which should persuade them to turn to Christ, 314—316. And by the contrary precepts and persuasions of Satan, 316—319.

Entertainments, expensive, sinfulness of, VI. 365, 366.

Equivocation, how far lawful, III. 532, 533. Its sinfulness, XIX. 239.

Error, particular directions and cautions against, V. 139—151. Contracts made in error, how far obligatory, VI. 292, 293. Errors about God and the necessary matters of salvation, removed by conversion, VII. 28—32. Self-ignorance the cause of errors, XVI. 52.

Esau's rejection considered and explained, III. 334.

Essentials of doctrine in which all Christians are agreed, V. 155. Explanation of them, 525—527. Nothing to be made essential but what God has made necessary, 188, 189. Whether a man may be saved who believes all the essentials of religion, coming to him by verbal tradition, without the knowledge of the Scriptures, 533, 534. What is the essence of holiness, XVI. 202. And of sanctification, *ib.* 203.

Estates of men greatly differing, fitted with temptations by the devil, II. 278.

Eternity, nearness of, a motive for redeeming time, III. 135, 136. Of the saving knowledge of the eternity of God, and its effects, XIII. 35—50. The eternity of the saint's rest, XXIII. 168—171.

Eve, temptation of, explained, XX. 436, 437.

Everlasting life, doctrine of the apostles' creed concerning, explained, XIX. 116—121.

Evidence, historical, credibility of, XIII. 376—378. Its vast importance

demonstrated, 408—414. What evidence will be adduced against mankind at the day of judgment, XVII. 434—450. Human faith may not have physical evidence, XX. 125—128. Superiority of the evidences of the Christian religion, XXI. 180. Directions for studying them, XII. 141—147. Whether any concurrence of moral evidence, at least such as the Gospel has, truly amounts to natural or certain evidence, XXII. 581—589.

Evil-speaking, cases of conscience respecting, VI. 386—390. Directions against it, 391—394. The sinfulness of evil-speaking, 394—397.

Evils of life, a perfect cessation from in heaven, XXII. 47.

Examination, not forbidden, but invited by the Gospel, XXI. 351. Whether a pastor may examine his people before the Lord's supper, V. 446. See also *Lord's Supper*, II.

Example of great men, vast importance of, II. 73. Of Christ, directions for imitating, 223—230; XII. 198—200. The good example of parents to be imitated by children, IV. 197—199. The examples mentioned in the Scriptures to be cautiously taken for precepts, V. 145, 146. How to know what examples related in Scripture are of universal obligation, and what not, 519—522. Scripture examples, how to be understood, XII. 231, 232. Wherein consists our imitation of the example of the lives of the saints on earth, 570, 571, Special importance of example to ministers, XIV. 58—60.

Excommunication, power of the people in, V. 404, 405. Remedy of a man who is injuriously excommunicated, 406. The case considered, of a pastor excommunicating a man, with whom the people will not forbear communion, 442, 443. Whether the whole, or the greater part, of the church may be excommunicated, 443, 444. If a church have two pastors, one of whom excommunicates a man, and the other absolves him, what the church and the dissenter should do, 444. For what sins a man may be excommunicated, 445. Of the power of the king in excommunication, VI. 55, 56. The question, Must an excommunicated person be loved or not? considered, 441.

Excuses, various, of sinners at the day of judgment exposed, XVII. 451—474.

Exhortation, form of, to the ungodly, when sick, IV. 452—464. And to the godly, 465—480. Motives to Christian exhortation, VI. 246—254. Special directions for exhortation, for the good of others, 257—263. How we are privately to exhort others to seek the rest of the saints, XXIII. 76. Sincerely and speedily, 77. Compassionately, 78—80. With all possible plainness and faithfulness, 80, 81. Also seriously, zealously, and effectually, 81—83. With prudence and discretion, 84. And backed with the authority of God, 85. Repeatedly, 86. Strive to bring all exhortation to an issue, *ib.* Exhort by example as well as by words, 87. How we are to exhort men to profit by public ordinances, 87—94. Objections and hinderances to the work of exhortation, stated and refuted, 94—104. Fourteen motives to animate to exhortation, 104—114. Advice to various classes specially to undertake this exhortation, 114—119. Particularly ministers of the Gospel, 115—145. And parents, 145—155.

Experience, human, no warrant for deducing doctrinal certainties, XV. 58.

Expenses, unnecessary and extravagant, how far to be tolerated by a superior, IV. 173, 174.

Experience of others, a means of strengthening the believer's apprehensions of the probability of salvation, IX. 107—111. Christian experience, the way to attain a firm belief, XX. 202—205.

Extemporary prayer, advantages and disadvantages of, V. 422—426. Rules for determining whether it be preferable to forms of prayer, 427.

Extremes to be repented of, and avoided with fear and caution, lest we run into the contrary extreme, II. 126, 127, 301, 302.

Eyes, uses of, III. 359. Of what sins they are most in danger, 360. Particular directions for the government of the eyes, 360—363.

F.

Faction, whether religious or secular, to be avoided, VI. 391.

Factors, living among infidels, or in a popish country, cases respecting, stated and answered, VI. 332—336. Directions to factors, 344—348.

Faith, articles of, the uses and ad-

vantages of, V. 531, 533. They may be lawfully subscribed, 541. How far human faith conduces to divine, V. 137—130.

FAITH, saving, importance of understanding the true nature of, IX. 43—46. And of performing the condition of it, by actual believing, 46—48.

I. *Nature of Faith*:—What it is, II. 172; XII. 9—12. Not human but divine, XXI. 357, 358. The grounds of the certainty of faith, XII. 12—16. Why God will have us live by faith and not by sight, 16—18. Practical uses of this subject, 18—28, 33—53. Directions for the strengthening of faith, 85—88. Natural truths presupposed to be considered, 88—90. Twelve directions for the confirmation of our faith, 138—149.

II. *Evidences of Faith*:—The true method of inquiry into the supernatural evidences of faith, and the rules therein to be observed, XII. 91—100. The evidences of faith briefly stated, 29—31. The proper evidence of faith, the Spirit and image of God himself, 100—103. The image of God's wisdom on the Christian religion, 103—112. The image of his goodness and holiness, 112—118. And his power, 119—127. The means of making known all this to us infallibly, 128—138. Real meaning of the assertion that faith hath no evidence, XV. 45, 46.

III. *Life of Faith*, briefly defined, II. 171, 172. Living by faith a remedy against temptations, II. 286. Twenty general directions for living by faith, XII. 150—169. How to live by faith in God, 169—188. Faith in God an important mean for the right government of the senses, III. 347, 348. The life of faith, as exercised upon Christ, explained, II. 173—188. Directions how to live by faith on Christ, XII. 189—201. The life of faith, as exercised upon the Holy Ghost, explained, II. 188—198. Directions to live by faith on the Holy Ghost, 201—224. How to exercise faith upon God's commandments for duty, 224—232. How to live by faith upon God's promises, 233—287. How faith must be exercised upon God's threatenings and judgments, 287—296. How to exercise faith about pardon of sin and justification, 297—311. Pernicious and dangerous errors detected which hinder the work of faith about our justification, and the contrary truths asserted, 311—351. Doctrinal directions how to live by faith, in order to the exercise of other graces and duties of sanctification and obedience to God, 351—356. Practical directions how to live by faith a life of holiness or love, 357—363. Of the order of graces and duties, 363—405. How to use faith against particular sins, 405—415. How to live by faith in prosperity, 415—433. And to escape the pride of prosperity, 433—452. How to escape the sin of fulness or luxury by faith, 452—460. How to conquer sloth and idleness by faith, 461—477. How by faith to overcome unmercifulness to the needy, 478—490. How to live by faith in troubles of conscience, and doubts or terrors about our spiritual and everlasting state, 490—505. How to live by faith in the public worshipping of God, 505—513. How to pray in faith, 513—516. How to live by faith towards children and other relations, 516—521. How by faith to order our affections to public societies, and the unconverted world, 521—525. How to live by faith in the love of one another, 525—541. How by faith to be followers of the saints, 541—574. How to die by faith, 574—578. How by faith to look aright to the coming of Jesus Christ in glory, 579—591.

Falling away from the truth, the several steps of, IV. 352, 353.

False speaking, what, is a lie, XIX. 239, 240. See *Lying*.

False witnessing, sinfulness of, XIX. 243.

Family, defined, IV. 50. Christian families are sanctified to God, 58. And dedicated to Him, 60. Directions for the holy government of families, 90—96. XIX. 483—489. Special motives to persuade men to the holy government of their families, IV. 96. It is a considerable part of God's government of the world, 97. As an ungoverned, ungodly family is a powerful means towards the damnation of all its members, 98. The happiness resulting from a holy well-governed family, *ibid.* 99. It propagates the fear of God from generation to generation, 99, 100. Is a preparative to a holy and well-governed church, 100, 101. Well-governed families tend to make a happy state and commonwealth, 101, 102. Preserve religion in times of public neglect or persecution, 102,

103. Family duties may be performed without exception or opposition from others, 103. Well-governed families, honourable and exemplary to others, *ibid.* 104. Are blessed with the special presence and favour of God, 104, 105. Directions for spending a day well with a family, XIX. 501, 502. And for each particular member of a family, how to spend every ordinary day in the week, IV. 230—239. And for the holy spending of the Lord's-day in families, 240—251., XIX. 507—509. Brief directions for them, about the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, IV. 312—342. A catechetical manual for the instruction of families, XIX. 10—292. The duty of family teaching, 210.

Family Worship, brief directions for, XIX. 502, 503. All sorts of divine worship not prohibited in it, IV. 51. Family worship is of divine institution, 54—56. Obligations of families to perform it, 56, 57. Different parts of family worship;—*First*, Teaching the Scripture, and how it is to be conducted, 58, 59. Nine arguments for this part of family worship, 59—66. *Secondly*, Family discipline, 66, 67. *Thirdly*, Solemn prayer and praises of God, supported by twenty arguments, 67—83. Objections to family worship, stated and refuted, 83—86. The frequency and proper seasons of family worship, 86—90. Special directions for family prayer, 309, 310. A form of prayer for families, morning and evening, VII. 453—455.

Family of Love, tenets of the sect of, XX. 295.

Farewell Sermon of Mr. Baxter at Kidderminster, XVIII. 196—237.

Fashions, the following of, how far lawful, III. 632.

Fast, whether one may be observed on the Lord's-day, V. 432. Whether it is lawful to observe stated times of fasting imposed by others, without extraordinary occasions, 454, 455. Particularly the fast of Lent, 455, 456. Directions for observing private fasts, XIX. 527, 528.

Father:—Of the saving knowledge of God as our Father, and the effects thereof, XII. 129—135.

Fathers of the Christian Church, opinions of, on the nature of the sin against the Holy Ghost, XX. 217—220. And whether it is remissible, 223.

Faults of others, in what cases they are to be disclosed, VI. 389, 390.

Favour of men, directions against overvaluing, II. 548—576.

Fear defined, III. 299. Its objects, *ib.* When sinful, 300. Directions against the sinful fear of God, 300—302. Of the devil, 302—304. And of men, 305—316.

Fears, perplexing, not to overwhelm believers, II. 142. Christianity affords the more powerful supports against the fear of death, XXI. 179.

Feasting, needless and tedious, a sinful waster of time, III. 159, 169.

Fellow-Servants, duties of, to one another, IV. 220—223. Directions for their holy conference or conversation, 224—229.

Fervency in prayer, how to be maintained, IV. 306—308.

Festivals, other than the Lord's-day, whether and how far they are lawful, XIII. 463—466.

Ficinus (Marsilius), account of the apparition of, XXI. 593, 594.

Filthy talk, special directions against, III. 552—554.

Finding of things lost, cases of conscience respecting, VI. 330—332.

First Cause of all things, the necessary existence of, proved, XX. 465—472. What that First Cause is, in itself, 472—489.

Flattery, sinfulness of, III. 482. The love of flattery, a sure mark of self-ignorance, XVI. 63—65.

Flesh, import of the term explained, III. 95—99. Its desires and pleasures to be mortified, II. 143—145. VIII. 144—147. What flesh-pleasing is unlawful, III. 99—104. Wherein consists the maliguity of this sin, 104—112. Delusions of men on this subject exposed. 113, 114. False signs of it, which cause men to be wrongly accused of this sin, 114. Directions and remedies against it, 115—119. The conflict between the flesh and the Spirit explained, XII. 221, 222. Objection urged by the flesh against afflictions refuted, XXIII. 66—70.

Flock, what is meant by, in Acts, xx. 28. XIV. 53. Every flock ought to have its own pastor, 75, 76. And must not be greater than ministers can oversee, 76—78. All the flock, and every individual member thereof, are objects of pastoral care, 81, 82. How ministers are to take heed of the flock;—See *Minister*, IV. 2. 4. (5.)

Following of Christ, what it is, XVIII. 127. Uses of this doctrine, 128—132.

Fonts, whether holy, and what reverence is due to them, V. 569, 570.

Food, dressing of, in what case not unlawful on the Lord's-day, XIII. 452, 453.

Fools, proved to be destroyed by prosperity, from Scripture and experience, XVII. 97—106. How they are destroyed, 107—109. Practical uses of the doctrine, 109—117.

Forgiveness of enemies, directions for, VI. 142—154. Solution of various cases respecting the forgiving of injuries and debts, 154—163. The doctrine of the apostles' creed concerning the forgiveness of sins, explained, XIX. 102—108. Explanation of the petition for forgiveness of sins in the Lord's-prayer, 152—154.

Form of Prayer, whether lawful, IV. 291. Whether those forms be lawful which are prescribed by others and not by God, *ib.* See *Prayer*.

Formality in religion, caution against, XIX. 447.

Fornication, sinfulness of, III. 436—446. Various approaches to it, XIX. 222, 223. Directions and cautions against it, III. 446—451. What satisfaction is to be made by a fornicator, VI. 516, 517.

Fraud, directions and cautions against, VI. 273—279.

Freedom of God, nature of, XIII. 135, 136.

Free-Will, how we have it, X. 88—91.

Friendship defined, VI. 455. The lawfulness of special friendship proved, 455, 456. Whether we may have more than one bosom friend, 456; or a man may take another bosom friend, who hath a pious wife, 457. Whether such bosom friend may be changed, 458. The nature of true friendship, 457, 458. The danger of loving a bosom friend too much, 459—462. What qualifications should direct us in the choice of a friend, 463—465. Directions for the right use of special friendship, 465—469. Arguments and helps to patience under the loss of friends dying in pain and misery, XI. 411—413. And under that unkindness and injury of friends, 415—419. Why Christians must expect, by the forsaking of their friends, to be conformed to Christ, XIII. 288—298. The aggravations of being forsaken by friends, 299. Consolatory considerations on being forsaken by friends, 300—307; and on their death, 311—316. Whether we shall know our friends in heaven, 316, 317; or have any more comfort in present friends than in others, 318—320.

Frugality defined, VI. 364. How far it is a duty to be frugal in small matters, 373.

Fruition of God, a part of the Saint's Rest, XII. 49—69.

Fulness, in what case sinful, XII. 452—456. The sinfulness of bestowing too much time upon it, 455. Why it is so much condemned by God, 457, 458. Directions how to escape this sin by faith, 459, 460.

Fundamentals of doctrine, how to be known, V. 524—527. Fundamental points in which all Christians are agreed, 155. The importance of frequently insisting upon them, XVII. 341.

Funeral Sermons:—On Mrs. Elizabeth Baker, XVII. 527—595. On Mrs. Mary Hanmer, XVIII. 10—57. On Mr. Henry Stubbs, 61—85. On Mrs. Mary Coxe, 91—118. On Henry Ashurst, Esq. 124—160. On Mr. John Corbet, 162—198.

Furniture, pompous, when to be accounted prodigality, VI. 371.

Future State briefly demonstrated, XX. 78, 79. Twenty queries for the conviction of a future state of happiness to the godly, and of misery to the ungodly, X. 155—174. Ignorance of the life to come, caused by self-ignorance, XVI. 40. The revelation of a future state of happiness or misery in the Scriptures, a proof of their divine authority, XXII. 318—333. A future state of retribution, proved from natural religion, XXI. 57—87. And by Satan's compacts with witches, 87. By apparitions, 88. By satanic possessions, 88—90. By subtle temptations, 90—92.

G.

GALATIANS, account of the false doctrine propagated among, XX. 1, 2. St. Paul's address to them in Gal. iii. 1, 2. Explained, 2—9.

Games, inordinate, a sinful waste of time, III. 165. See *Recreations*.

Gaming, a sinful recreation, III. 616. Cases of conscience respecting, determined, VI. 328—330.

Genealogy of Christ, alleged contradiction in, refuted, XXI. 547.

Genesis, some alleged difficulties in the book of, explained, XX. 434—437. Particularly in the first chapter, XXI. 349, 350.

Gestures, the fittest for public worship considered, V. 441, 442.

Gifts, ministerial, of others, whether they may be made use of by a minis-

ter, V. 418—420. The reputation of gifts and spiritual abilities, how to be denied, XI. 284—289.

Glorifying of God, defined, II. 434. General directions for glorifying God, XVII. 371—375. Directions for glorifying God with the heart, II. 435—438. By our tongues particularly, 438—448; and by our lives, 448—458. How God is glorified by our works, XVII. 192—194. By what works, 194, 195. And in body and spirit, 346, 347. The character of one who glorifies God delineated, 195—227. Who are urged to glorify God, on the ground that he hath bought them, 347—349. Exhortation to glorify God, 349—370.

Glorying in the cross of Christ:—In what a Christian may and must glory, IX. 552—557. Confutation of the Antinomian mistake, which tells men that they must not glory nor fetch their comforts from any thing in themselves, 557—562. Discovery of their error, who can glory in the state of exaltation, but not of crucifixion, 562—566. Twelve reasons against glorying in ourselves, 566—570. Glorying in any thing save the cross of Christ and our crucifixion thereby, is a thing which the soul of a Christian should abhor, 572. What is not excluded, 572—574. What is excluded, 574—579. Christians to take heed in what respects they glory in spiritual mercies, 580—582. Glorying, when improper, and when lawful, XVIII. 163, 164. Divine revelations, acquainting the soul with heaven, are matters of glorying, 165, 166.

Glory, frequent believing views of, the most precious cordial in afflictions, XXIII. 242—248.

Gluttony, defined, III. 369. In what cases it is or is not sinful, 369—371. Its causes, 371—376. Its great sinfulness, 376—385; particularly as a waster of time, 163, 164. Directions or helps against it, 385—399.

Glynn (Mr. Serjeant) dedication of an Assize Sermon to, XVII. 337—340.

Gnostics, notice of the heresy of, XX. 284.

GOD, definition of, XXII. 50, and *note* °. The being of, briefly proved, II. 7, and *note*. This, a matter of natural revelation, 172, 173. The necessary existence of a first cause proved, according to natural religion, XX. 465—472. The nature and attributes of God, 472—489. Of God, as related to his creatures, especially to man, and as his owner, 489—492; II. 201. Of man's relation to God, as his owner, II. 203; XX. 493—495. Benefits resulting from the knowledge of God in this relation, II. 204—206. Relation of God to man, as his moral governor, XX. 495—522. Of man's subjection to God, or relation to him as our Ruler, XXI. 1—5. Of God's particular laws, as known in nature, 5—17. Of God's relation to man, as his Chief Good, 17—38. Of man's relation to God, as his Father, or Chief Good, and consequent duty in that relation, 38—52. What natural light declares of the mercy of God to sinners, 122—130. The government and end of God in creation, II. 8. He is the beginning, the way, and the end of religion, II. 165, 166. Seventeen general directions for walking with God in a life of faith and holiness, 170—458. What acts we are to exercise upon God, 202. Helps to self-resignation to God, 206, 207. The duty of submission to God, as our Sovereign and King, explained, 207, 208. Special directions for this purpose, 207—221. Directions for loving God as our Father and Felicity, 353—395. For trusting in him, 400—408. For delighting in him, 408—421. For thankfulness to him, 433, 434. For glorifying him with the heart, 435—438. For praising him with our tongues, 438—448. For glorifying him in our lives, 448—458. Doubts respecting the prudence of love to God or ourselves resolved, 483—493. The pleasing of God our business, safety, and content, 573—575. Benefits thereof, 575, 576. Signs of pride against God, III. 11—23. Importance of living under a sense of the government of God, 150, 151. Constant obedience to him a remedy against evil thoughts, 175, 176. A sense of his omnipresence a preventive of such thoughts, 176, 177. A sense of his love a means of furnishing the mind with good thoughts, 185, 186. Directions against the sinful fear of God, 300, 302. The name of God, when taken in vain, 501, 502. Directions for avoiding this sin, 502—507. God blesses well-governed families with his presence and favour, IV. 104, 105. The special duties of children and youth towards God, 199—203. Errors respecting God removed in conversion, VII. 28—32. Reconciliation to God one of the benefits of conversion, 197. De-

linestion of his wisdom, as displayed in the Christian religion, XII. 103—112. Of his goodness and holiness, 112—118; and of his power, 119—127. How to live by faith in Him, 169—188. To be acknowledged as our total benefactor and ultimate end, 177, 178. How God is present with believers, XIII. 321. By his gracious fatherly presence, *ib.* Sufficiently, to do them good, 322—324; also for holy converse, 324—326. Importance of having a true conception of God, as he must be loved, XV. 269—273. God, how manifest in the flesh, XVIII. 435. Justified in the Spirit, 435, 436. Seen of angels, 443, 444. Preached to the Gentiles, 444, 445. Believed on in the world, 445—449. Received up into glory, 449, 450. Short meditations on the shedding of God's love abroad on the heart by the Holy Ghost, 503—518. The doctrine of the Apostles' creed, concerning God, explained, XIX. 61—67. Why we address God as 'Our Father,' in the Lord's prayer, 124—127. The hallowing of God's name explained, 128—134. How we pray that his kingdom may come, 134—144. How his will is to be done, 145—147. Explanation of the first commandment in the decalogue concerning God, 164—171. How his name is taken in vain, 179—185. The nature and works of God fully revealed only in the Christian religion, XXI. 171, 172. His image visible in the doctrine and person of Christ, 206—213. See *Knowledge of God, Walking with God, Worship.*

Godfathers, the true meaning of, in baptism, V. 338, 339. Whether it is lawful to make use of them, 339, 340.

Godliness described, X. 12—19; 504—507. Its nature and excellencies, II. 134, 135. The life of godliness, what, 171. How Satan would make it seem troublesome and ungrateful, by difficulties, 136, 137. By various sects, 137—139. By practical scrupulosity, 139. By setting young Christians upon overdoing, by their own inventions, 140, 141. By perplexing fears and sorrows, 141, 142. By unmortified lusts, 142. By actual sins, 143. By ignorance of the covenant of grace, *ib.* Who they are that profanely deride, scorn, or oppose godliness, III. 557—565. Aggravations of their sin, and its importance, 565—572. Directions against it, 572—577. A full answer to the common reproach, that professors of godliness are the most covetous of all, IX. 528—536. Contempt of godliness rebuked, X. 9—12. Signs of true godliness, 20—22. Confutation of the objection of those who say that it never was a good world since there was so much godliness and so much preaching, 206—221. Who are malignant enemies to godliness, 504—519. Undeniable reasons against malignant enmity to serious godliness, 520—537. The reputation of godliness, how to be denied, XI. 291—298.

Godly, who are such, II. 165. The difference between them and the ungodly, an evidence of the truth of the holy Scriptures, 499, *note*. Directions to these, when sick, for a safe departure, IV. 412—414. Temptations to which they are specially exposed, 414—416. Form of an exhortation to them, 465—480. Questions of conscience respecting love to the godly, VI. 436—444. Directions for loving the godly, 444—446. Motives or meditative helps to them, 446, 447. Directions for such as are desirous to be sincerely and soundly godly, X. 22—26. Reproof of the godly for indolence in seeking the saint's rest, XXII. 450—455.

Good, etymology of the word, XVII. 291. The doing of good the duty of all, and to be studied by Christians, IX. 182—189; XVII. 292. To whom we are to do good, 293, 294. What is the good which we must do, 294. Qualifications for doing good, 295. Rules to be observed in doing it, 295—300. Impediments to doing good, 300—303. What is to be done by him who would do good to many, 303—318. Motives to doing good, addressed to various classes, 319—333.

Goodness of God vindicated, with respect to the doctrine of reprobation and damnation, VIII. 511—533. The infinite goodness of God, proved, XX. 480—482. Benefits resulting from the consideration of God's goodness, IX. 27—30. Objections to it answered, 30—32. View of the goodness of God, as displayed in the Gospel, XII. 112—118. On the saving knowledge of the goodness of God, and its effects, XIII. 71—81.

Good works, doctrine of, explained, II. 321—324; IV. 479. In what order to be done, 482, 483. Directions for performing them, and for doing good, II. 324—332; VI. 503—507.

Catalogue of good works, offered to the consideration of the rich, IX. ccexxxi.—ccexxxiv.

Gospel, with its histories, proved to be divine, V. 124—126. The lawfulness of standing up at the reading of the Gospel considered, 440. Fifteen queries for the conviction of infidels, that the Gospel is the infallible word of God, X. 175—183. The commonness of the Gospel, a cause why men make light of Christ, XVI. 517. Summary of the evidences of the Gospel, as a divine revelation, XIX. 33—53. The propagation of the Gospel, a proof of the truth of the Scriptures, XXII. 305—307. And also the preservation in the world, 307—309. The unbelief of the Jews no valid argument against the Gospel, XXI. 257. See *Christianity*.

Government (civil), nature and causes of, VI. 23—27. Examination of the theory, that the people are the source of government, 27—36. Is the civil governor a judge in controversies of faith or worship, 53, 54. Christianity, the greatest help to government, 87—91; XXI. 366. And the most excellent rule for government, XXI. 175.

Government of the Church, what is determined in Scripture respecting it, and what not, V. 28. Whether any form of it be of Divine institution, 373—379. Whether any forms of church-government may be invented by men, 380—395. The true nature of pastoral church-government, 395—397. Whether any part of it may be deputed to or performed by a layman, 397—399. The true sense of the distinction of pastoral power *in foro interiore et exteriore*, 400, 401. In what sense the magistrate only is said to have the external government of the church, and the pastors the internal, 401, 402.

Grace, means of, directions for the constant use of, II. 48—51. The first degrees of grace or gifts, not to be estimated too highly, 102, 103. Time and diligence necessary to growth in grace, 103, 104. Evils of thinking too highly of our attainments in grace, 105—108. Caution lest grace degenerate into counterfeits or formality, 157—159. What constitutes the 'day of grace,' III. 333. When it may be said to be past, 334, 335. Whether grace is an effect of baptism, V. 358—361. Necessity of seeking increase of grace, VIII. 271—275. Motives to convince weak Christians of the necessity of seeking it, 275—320. Directions for confirmation in a state of grace, 321—370. The freeness of the law of grace to all, if they will repent and believe, IX. 35. The difference between general and special grace, 35—38. How much comfort the unconverted may receive from general grace, 38—43. Next to the comforts of general grace, the comforts of the probability of special grace to be received before believers are ripe for the comforts of assurance, 103, 104. Ministers must take heed that they be not destitute of the grace of God, XIV. 53, 54. Importance of the work of saving grace being wrought upon their own souls, 215—219. Criterion for judging of true grace, XV. 283—285; XVI. 182. Ten infallible marks of grace, which are found in all sound believers, XVII. 41—44. The grace of God, how sufficient for us, in all our weaknesses, XVIII. 182—184. The distinctions between common and special grace illustrated, XXIII. 474—480.

Graceless sinners, directions to, for the attaing of saving grace, II. 5—88. Signs of a graceless state, IV. 358, 359. Directions to graceless souls, what to do that they may come to delight in God and godliness, X. 365—370.

Graces, counterfeit, a hinderance of conversion, VII. 290, 291. Direction against them, 291.

Gratitude to God, duty of, II. 421. True gratitude, how distinguished from counterfeits, 422. Directions for it, 423, 424.

Great men, influence of the example of, II. 73.

Grief, excessive, when sinful, III. 320. Directions against it, 321—329.

Growth in knowledge and holiness, exhortation to, II. 102—108. Nature of growth in grace, VIII. 272—275. Necessity of seeking it, and motives for seeking it, 275—320. Directions for seeking confirmation in grace, 321—375.

Grundletonians, tenets of, XX. 296.

Guardians, contracts made by, during the infancy of their wards, how far obligatory on the latter, VI. 290, 291.

Guilty person, whether he may plead 'not guilty,' VI. 379, 380.

H.

Habits, sacred, remarks on, III. 636. Our habitual state to be judged of, by our actions, XVI. 276—282.
Hall (Bishop), his character of a hypocrite, XVII. 78, 79.
Hallowing of the name of God explained, XIX. 128—134.
Hammond (Dr. H.), observations of, on confirmation, XIV. 593, 594.
Hands, imposition of, why used in Scripture times, XIV. 453—455. Is lawful for us, 455. The obligation to use this ceremony in confirmation, 455—459. Laying on of hands, with ministerial prayer, the Scripture way for conferring the Holy Spirit, 460—466. And confirmed by the practice of the Christian church, 466—468.
Hanmer (Mrs. Mary), Biographical notice of, XVIII. 3, 4. Reflections on her character, experience, and death, 45—53.
Happiness of the saints, X. 132—134. All things necessary to happiness contained in the Christian religion, XXI. 176. The precepts of which are adapted to promote the happiness of all men, 352—354.
Hardness of heart defined, II. 513, 514, 516., of conversion, VII. 274—280. Directions against hardness of heart, II. 514—527; VII. 280—283. Evil and danger, II. 516—518. Its doleful effects in this world, 519—521. God's hardening the heart explained, VII. 319. The desperate hardness of the heart a cause why men slight Christ, XVI. 513, 514.
Hatred of God, nature of, II. 359, 360. Directions against it, III. 286—290. The enmity of Satan against Christ, proved by the inbred hatred in the hearts of all the servants of Satan against the kingdom and true subjects of Christ, XX. 311—316.
Head of the church, none besides Jesus Christ, V. 280. Impiety of setting up such a head, 310, 311.
Health, whatever conduces to, should be the measure of our diet, III. 387—392. Bodily health, how to be denied, XI. 231—236. The due care of our health not to be neglected, XXIII. 307, 308.
Healths, drinking of, unlawful, III. 418. And to be avoided, 433.
Hearing the word of God preached, directions for, so as to understand it, IV. 251—254; XIX. 511—514. And to remember what we hear, IV. 254—257. For holy resolutions and affections in hearing, 257—259. And for bringing into practice what we hear, 259—263. Neglect of hearing the word preached, a hinderance of conversion, VII. 251, 252. Foolish objections against hearing, answered, 253—258. What constitutes the hearing of faith, XX. 5. And what sinful hearing, III. 365. The danger of it, 366. Directions for governing the faculty of hearing, 366—369.
Heart:—an honest heart, necessary to learn aright of Christ, II. 232, 233. Directions against hardness of heart, 514—527. Importance of keeping it, 531. The change of the heart in conversion described, VII. 32—98. In what sense God hardens the hearts of sinners, 282—283. Means for softening the heart, 283. The not observing of the heart in a time of trial, a hinderance to self-acquaintance, XVI. 273, 274. Short meditations on the shedding abroad of God's love on the heart by the Holy Ghost, XVIII. 503—518. Directions for preparing the heart for heavenly meditation, XXIII. 335—338. And for managing and watching over the heart, in this duty, 400—407.
Heathens, salvability of, considered, XV. 231, 232. Whether the works of heathen writers may be studied by Christians, III. 552—554. Examination of the religion of ancient and modern heathen nations, XXI. 139—142. Immorality of celebrated heathens, 240, and *note*.
Heaven, kingdom of, what, VII. 17, 18. In what its blessedness consists, VIII. 171—173. Whether we shall know our friends in heaven, XIII. 316, 317. The reality of the third heaven and of the heavenly paradise, XVIII. 166—168. Possibility of souls being rapt up in it, 168, 169. The things seen therein unutterable to mortal men, 169—171. How revelations of heaveuly things may be made a ground for sinful exaltation, 171, 172.
Heavenly Contemplation. See *Meditation*.
HEAVENLY LIFE.
I. *Motives to a Heavenly Life*:—Importance of it, XXIII. 217—222. A heart set upon heaven will be one of the most unquestionable evidences of sincerity, 222—224. The noblest part of the Christian disposition,

224, 225. The nearest and truest way to live a life of comfort, 225—229. A heart in heaven the most excellent preservative against temptations and corruptions, by keeping the heart employed, 230. By clearing the understanding, 230—234. By preposessing the affections with the highest delights, 234—236. And by keeping us in God's blessing, 236, 237. The diligent keeping of the heart on heaven will preserve the vigour of Christian graces, and put life into all our duties, 237—242. The frequent believing views of glory the most precious cordial in afflictions, 242—248. With him who has his conversation in heaven, you may take counsel, and go up to the celestial house of God, 248—251. No man so highly honours God as he who has his conversation in heaven, 251. Unless we make conscience of keeping our hearts in heaven, we disobey the commands of God, lose the sweetest parts of Scripture, and frustrate the most gracious discoveries of God, 252, 253. It is but equal that our hearts should be set on God, when his heart is set so much on us, 253, 254. Our interest in heaven, and our relation to it, an additional motive to a heavenly life, 254—257. There is nothing else that is worth the setting our hearts on, 257—259. Objections answered, 259—263.

II. *Hinderances of a Heavenly Life*, which are to be avoided:—Living in known unmortified sin, XXIII. 264—267. An earthly mind, 267—269. The company of ungodly and sensual men, 269—274. Too frequent disputes about lesser truths, 274—277. A proud and lofty spirit, 277—282. Wilful laziness and slothfulness of spirit, 282—288. The contenting ourselves with the mere peculiarities to this heavenly life, while we are utter strangers to the life itself, 288—290.

III. *Some general helps to a Heavenly Life*:—Know that heaven is the only treasure, and labour to know also what a treasure it is, XXIII. 291, 292. And that as it is the only happiness, so also it is thy happiness, 292—295. Apprehend how near it is, and think seriously of its speedy approach, 295—297. Converse much and seriously on it with those who can speak from their hearts, 297, 298. Make it thy business in every duty to wind up thy affections nearer heaven, 298, 299. Make advantage of every occurrence, and of every providence, to remind the soul of its approaching rest, 299—302. Be much in the angelical work of praise, 302—304. Keep the soul possessed with true believing thoughts of the exceeding and infinite love of God, 305, 306. Carefully observe the drawings of the Spirit, 306, 307. Neglect not due care of bodily health, 307, 308.

Heavenly-mindedness recommended, II. 457. A heavenly mind the only joyful mind, XXIII. 225—229.

Hell, Christ's descent into, explained, XIX. 77. The eternity of hell torments vindicated, XXI. 95—115, 320—322.

Herbert (Edward Lord), animadversions on his treatise '*De Veritate*,' XXI. 556. Answers to questions expressed or implied in his treatise, viz. *First*, Whether, if Christ, and not only our repentance and belief in God, be taken for a sacrifice and price given to God for man's redemption, it will follow that most of the world are damned by God's will, without any remedy, 557—572. *Secondly*, Whether, the *notitiæ communes* are not many more than the five articles enumerated by Lord Herbert, 572—575. *Thirdly*, whether the *notitiæ communes* are the only certainties in religion, 575—578. *Fourthly*, Whether they make up all the religion of the catholic church, 578. *Fifthly*, whether all revelation for religion must be but a creed, containing these common notices or truths, 578, 579. *Sixthly*, Whether all supernatural revelations are to be tried by the common notions known by nature, 579, 580. *Seventhly*, Whether these common verities infer not the truth of Christianity, 581. *Eighthly*, Whether they are necessary conditions of the certain knowledge of a divine revelation, *ib.* *Ninthly*, Whether any concurrence of moral evidence, at least such as the Gospel has, truly amounts to natural or certain evidence, 581—589. *Tenthly*, Whether the common custom of sacrificing throughout the world in all generations, were not their actual confession that the sinner deserved death, and that God's justice required punishment or satisfaction, 589—590. *Eleventhly*, Whether interest make the judgment of divines in the cause of faith, more suspicious or

contemptible than other men's, 590—593.
Herbert (George), poem of, on the excellence of Christian divinity, quoted, XV. 223. On earthly pleasures and sorrows, XXIII. 436. The 'Believer's Home,' a poem, 463—465.
Herbert (Sir Henry), dedication to, of the 'More Reasons of the Christian Religion,' XXI. 521, 522.
Heresy, what, V. 158. Who are heretics, 249; XVI. 287. Directions for escaping heresy, V. 134—150. The question considered, whether a heretic by his knowledge may be a lover of God, as God, XV. 232—235. Whether heretics are members of the Catholic church, XVI. 287. Unsanctified and ungodly men proved to be the greatest heretics, 391—403. The enmity of Satan proved by his endeavours to raise heresies, XX. 277.
Heretic defined, XX. 278. Different sorts of heretics, *ib.* Notice of some of the more ancient heresies before the introduction of Popery, 279—286. The success of Satan by those heresies, 287.
Heylin's (Dr.) objections to the apostolic appointment of the Lord's-day for holy worship refuted, XIII. 383, 384. And to its subsequent observance by Christians, 385, 386, 388—390, 391—405.
Histories, fictitious, the reading of, a sinful waste of time, III. 367. The credibility of history asserted, XIII. 376—378; and its importance, 408—414. Uncertainty of history, both civil and ecclesiastical, XV. 51—53. Catechetical abstract of the Old Testament History, XVIII. 531—596. And of the New Testament History, 596—611.
HOLINESS defined, II. 165. V. 569. The infinite holiness of God proved, XX. 482. The practical knowledge and its effects, XIII. 137—142. In what the holiness of man consisteth, XX. 482. The state of holiness, described, II. 19, 20; and also its life, 20, 21. The particulars of a holy life examined, X. 109—124. A love of holiness to be inculcated in children, IV. 180, 181. The placing of holiness in certain opinions, a hinderance of conversion, VII. 319, 320. A holy life the duty of every one, II. 10. Holiness and its fruits the best part, X. 132—134. Why most men choose it not, 134, 135. The excuses of refusers answered, 136—138. Holiness found to be best for all societies, 184. As it unites all in one head and centre, *ib.* Has the most uniting, excellent, and powerful end of duty, 185. Takes away the ball of the world's contention, which breaketh societies, 186. Destroys selfishness, *ib.* Has the most righteous laws, 187. Is contrary to all disturbing evil, *ib.* Effectually disposes the mind to duty, 188. Cleanses the very heart, and killeth secret sin, *ib.* Cements societies with unfeigned love, *ib.* Makes princes and rulers a double blessing, 189—191. Makes the most loyal and obedient subjects, 191—194. Makes men true to their covenants, 199. Teaches the true method of obeying, 200. Makes men of public spirit, *ib.* Makes it their business to do good, 201. Makes men love enemies and forgive wrongs, *ib.* Interesteth societies in the favour and protection of God, *ib.* Is the surest way to all supplies, *ib.* Is the honour of societies, 202. It must be best which is so heavenly, *ib.* Times of holiness the best times, 203—206. Holiness the safest way, 222—230. The only honest way, 230—244. The most gainful way, 245—258. The most honourable way, 258—291. Holiness proved to be the most honourable way, *First*, from the nature of the thing itself, 296, and from the revelations of God, and the knowledge of believers, 296—303. From the operations of grace upon the will and affections, 303—308. From the quality of external holy duties, 309—329. From the objects of holy acts, 329—334. *Secondly*, from the helps and concomitants which attend it, 337—339. And, *Thirdly*, from its effects, 339—341. The aggravation of the delights of holiness compared with the delights of sin, 341—350. Answers to objections, drawn from the sad lives of believers, and from God's command to men to fast and mourn, 350—356. Reproof to, and misery of, those who can find no pleasure in a holy life, 358—365. Directions to such, how they may come to delight in God and holiness, 365—370. Reproof to those self-troubling Christians, who live as if they found more grief than pleasure in the ways of God, 370—376. Their objections answered, 376—390. Directions to them how they may find delight in God and holiness, 390—400. The aptness of Christ's teaching to produce the love of God, XV.

218, 219. Why the ungodly world hate holiness, but not learning, 225—227. The essence of holiness, what, XVI. 202. Directions and explanations, on the nature, necessity, and means of holiness, to keep up the resolutions of the converted, XIX. 459—470. The parts and practice of a holy life, explained for personal and family instruction, 470—482. The holiness of the Christian religion, XXI. 168, 169.

Holy, what denominates us and our duties holy, II. 199, 200.

Holy-Days, the appointment and observance of, whether lawful, V. 501, 502.

HOLY SPIRIT, or *HOLY GHOST*, doctrine of the Scriptures concerning, explained, II. 190, 191., XX. 5, 6. What is meant by believing in the Holy Ghost, XIX. 88, 89, XX. 50—54. Various modes of denying the Holy Ghost, XIX. 89, 90. How we are sanctified by the Spirit, XIX. 90. And are to judge of those who boast of the Spirit and of revelations, 91, 92. Errors corrected, and questions concerning his operations answered, II. 192—194. Belief in the Holy Ghost, a practical belief, II. 189. Character of the sin against the Holy Ghost, *ib.*, III. 332. Special directions for obeying the Holy Spirit, and following his motions, as leading to communion with God, II. 195—198. The Holy Spirit not to be quenched, 196, 197. How He is quenched, V. 567, 568., XIX. 551. Directions in this case, 551, 552. Whether He is to have a more perfect kingdom of love different from the reign of the Creator and the Redeemer, V. 556, 557. Effects of the knowledge of God the Holy Ghost, as our Sanctifier and Comforter, in proving the corruption of our nature, XIII. 108. In engaging us to magnify, and to be convinced of the necessity of, his renewing work, 109. In raising a high estimation of his works, 114. The testimony of the Holy Spirit to the truth of the Gospel, by the apostles and first publishers of it, XIX. 37—48. The sanctifying testimony of the Holy Spirit in all true Christians, 49—53. Nature of the illumination of the Holy Spirit explained, II. 104, 105. His motions, how to be discerned, IV. 294, 295. In what manner the Holy Spirit sets bishops over the churches, V. 568. In what manner He is given to infants in baptism, 345—354. Whether the right of baptized persons to the sanctifying operations of the Holy Ghost is absolute, or conditional, 354—358. Whether the Holy Spirit or the Scripture is to be the test, and which is to be preferred, 558, 559. How far good men now preach and pray by the Spirit, 565. How to live by faith on the Holy Ghost, XII. 201—224. In what sense the Holy Ghost was not given, because Christ was not glorified, 204, and that the baptized believers mentioned in Acts xix., had not heard that there was a Holy Ghost, *ib.* How to know when the Holy Spirit putteth any thing into our minds, XII. 498. Twenty considerations, by way of queries, to convince those who deny or extenuate the sanctifying work of the Holy Ghost, XIII. 107—114. The Holy Spirit, how given in baptism, XIV. 461—464. The renewing operations of the Holy Spirit upon the soul, a proof of its immortality, XVIII. 285—298. Short meditations on the shedding abroad God's love in the heart by the Holy Ghost, 503—518. The testimony of the Spirit, a sufficient proof of the truth of the Gospel, XX. 9. The commonness of the miraculous works of the Spirit, to prove the truth of the Gospel, and their sufficiency, 9—15. How they oblige us, 94. Proofs that that is the true doctrine and religion by which the Spirit is given, with cautions for the right understanding thereof, 57—61. Examination of the question, whether we must try the doctrine by the Spirit, or the Spirit by the doctrine, 61—65. Use of this argument against infidelity, 65—68, Against the Seekers, 68—71. Against the revolters of these times, 75—77. And to those who have not the Spirit, 77, 78. The drawings of the Spirit to be carefully observed as a means and help to a heavenly life, XXIII. 306, 307. See *Sin against the Holy Ghost.*

Homilies, lawfulness of reading, in churches, V. 539.

Honesty, necessary, to learn aright of Christ, II. 232, 233. Holiness, the only way of honesty, X. 230—244.

Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity, examination of certain principles in, VI. 27—36.

Hope defined, III. 283. In what cases it is sinful, *ib.* 284. Directions against sinful hope, 284—286.

House of Commons, Mr. Baxter's dedication of his fast sermon to them,

XVII. 121. Urged to personal repentance, and to remember all their misdoings, 131—145. And to proceed to reformation and to promote religion, 145—150.

Housekeeping, great, when to be accounted hospitality, VI. 371.

Humiliation, true nature of, VIII. 61. Preparatory humiliation, what, *ib.* Saving humiliation commences in the understanding, 62. Is rooted in the will, 63. Works in the affections, 65. And shows itself in outward expressions and actions, *ib.* Uses and ends of humiliation, 66—77. Mistakes to be avoided respecting humiliation, 77—80. Whether it be possible to be too much humbled, 80, 81. Motives for submission to a thorough humiliation, 90—94.

Humiliation, Days of, by whom to be appointed, V. 464, 465. On the public celebration of, XV. 498, 499. Self-ignorance keeps the soul from true humiliation, XVI. 41. Directions for the right keeping of, XIX. 527, 528.

Humility, defined, II. 2, 3. Necessary to learn aright of Christ, II. 232. Counterfeits of humility stated, III. 10, 11. Character of the truly humble, 52. Direction for growing in humility, VIII. 342—344. Vast importance of humility to ministers, XIV. 125, 126. Want of humility, a criterion of self-ignorance, XVI. 59—61.

Hunting, an unlawful sport, III. 615.

HUSBANDS.

I. *Husbands and Wives*, the mutual duties of, towards each other, IV. 116, 117; XIX. 209, 495, 496. How to preserve conjugal love, IV. 117—119. Cohabitation, 119, 120. To abhor adultery, and whatever else tends to unchasteness and the violation of the marriage-bed, 120—122. Delight in each other's society, 122, 123. To avoid dissensions, 123. The necessity of this, 123, 124. And directions for it, 124—127. To promote the salvation of each other, 127. Motives to this duty, *ib.* 128—130. Directions for it, 130—136. To promote the comfort of each other in health and in sickness, 136, 137. To help each other in their worldly business and estates, 137, 138. In the education of their children, 138. And in works of charity and hospitality, 139, 140. In what manner husbands and wives must perform their duties to each other, 140, 141. May husband and wife part by mutual consent, if they find it to be for the good of both, 158, 159. May they consent to be divorced and marry others, 159.

II. *The special Duties of Husbands to their Wives*, IV. 141; XIX. 496. The husband must undertake the principal part of the government of the family, IV. 141, 142. He must unite authority and love, 142. Maintain the authority of his wife in the family, 142, 143. And preserve her honour, 143. He ought to teach her in the matters belonging to her salvation, *ib.* To conduct family prayer, 144. To be the chief provider for the family, *ib.* To be the strongest in family patience, *ib.* In what manner all these duties are to be regarded, 144, 145. May the husband put away the wife, without the magistrate, 161, 162. Does the desertion of one party disoblige the other, 163. What is to be done, in case of the known intention of one to murder the other, 165. Or, if there be a fixed hatred of each other, *ib.* 166. Or, if a woman scold her husband, while praying or instructing his family, 166, 167. Is it lawful to suffer or contribute to the known sin, materially, of a wife, child, servant, or other relations, 167—173. What is to be done by a husband possessed of a large estate, which enables him to do much good, who has a proud or prodigal wife, that she will rage, be unquiet, or go mad, if she be hindered from wasting it, 173—175; X. 431, 432. Whether a husband may bear with sinful vanities in his wife, X. 431. See *Divorce, Wives.*

Hymns, Sacred:—Prayer of a penitent sinner, XIX. 646, 647. Praise to our Redeemer, a hymn for the Lord's-day, 647—652. A Psalm of praise, to the tune of Psalm cxlviii., 652—655.

Hypocrisy, defined, II. 527. Directions for escaping it, 530—548. The abounding of hypocrisy, a criterion for detecting self-ignorance, XVI. 61, 62.

Hypocrites, or seeming Christians, different sorts and degrees of, described, II. 528. How their seeming religion differs from true religion, XVII. 9—12. What is wanting to them which prove their religion vain, 12—17. The character of a hypocrite delineated; as to his faith, VIII. 384. And the grounds and reasons for his religion, 385, 386. He has no saving practical knowledge of the essentials of reli-

gion, 386, 387. Has only the ineffectual motions of the Spirit to a holy life, 388. Has no true love of God and holiness, 389, 390. Has only a general, ineffectual love of God, not for his holiness, 391. Lives to the flesh, 393. Though he may understand the letter of the Gospel, he has no living faith, 394. Though eminent for knowledge, yet he does not resign himself to the teachings of Christ, 395, 396. His repentance does not go to the root of his sin, 397. He loves darkness rather than light, 399. Though he may approve of holiness generally, yet he cannot endure it, when it comes to particulars, 400, 401. He would serve God and Mammon, 402. Though, notionally and generally, he may approve of strictness, yet, secretly, he will not serve God at too dear a rate, 404. Selfishness is his predominant principle, 407. He is really carnal, 409. And a worldling, 411. The servant of the world. 413. Present things carry away his heart, 415. He can better take up with the world alone, than with God alone, 417. He estimates things principally as they concern his interest, 418, 419. Is forward in easy parts of duty, and backward to thorough obedience in the most displeasing parts of duty, 419. Seeks and takes up his chief contentment in some carnal thing, 423. Can have no certainty or probability that he is a child of God, 425. Is hardened in his carnal state of presumption, 427. Pride is his reigning sin, 428. He is deceived by his own heart, 429. Does not look for suffering, 432. His hope is built upon the sand, 434. Is often overcome by difficult passages of Scripture and hard providences, *ib.* Is insincere, 435. Is most careful how to prosper in this world, 436. Trusts not God for any thing that he can trust himself or the creature, *ib.* Selfishness is his predominant nature, 439. He is very little employed about his thoughts, *ib.* Has little power over his passions, 440. Uses his tongue to subserve his carnal ends, 442. Though he can talk about religion, his discourse is first about his own interest, and next about externals of religion, 443. Various shelters under which hypocrites clothe themselves, exposed, 445, 446. The hypocrite does not redeem time, 448. He lives to himself, 449. Loves none but for himself, to any considerable degree, 450. Though he may have some love to real Christians, yet that love is subservient to his carnal self-love, 451, 452. Though he can seem to forgive wrongs for Christ's sake, yet it is only for his own sake, 453. He has only a seeming justice, 455. In his labour he is chiefly ruled by his flesh, 456. Shows his hypocrisy by being false in his relations to man, while he pretends to be pious and obedient to God, 457. He will seem to excel all others in loyalty and obedience, when it makes for his carnal ends, 461. Fears man more than God, 464. Is only zealous finally for himself, 466. Is destitute of charity and tenderness to the weak, 467. Is zealous for unity and peace in the church, only for his own sake, 475, 479. Is either a mere temporiser, or affects singularities in the opposite extreme, 483. Chooses his religion from regard to his own interest, 487. Will have one party on his side, 489. Is most easily engaged against his teachers, when they preach against his sin, 491. Is destitute of the establishing experiment of the power of the Gospel, 491, 492. Has neither the rational nor the passionate part in sincerity, 493. Death and judgment, and the thoughts of them, are most unwelcome to him, 497. The self-deceiving character of the hypocrite described, II. 52—54. His dangerous state, 54, 55. How far an unsanctified hypocrite can love an ungodly man, VI. 442. The conviction and reproof of hypocrites, who live contrary to the faith which they profess, XII. 54—61. A general exhortation to them, to live as believers, 61—68. Their mock-repentance characterised, 491. By what means and method the hypocrite makes shift to deceive himself by his religion, XVII. 17—22. What moveth him to this self-deceit, and what are the uses and reasons of this vain religion, 22—31. In what respects his religion is not vain, 32—35. And in what respects it *is* vain, 35, 36. Why a seeming hypocritical religion is so common in comparison of serious faith and godliness, 36—38. The detection of the hypocrite, by his contradicting all the parts of his Christian profession, 53—62. His unbridled tongue, 62, [See *Tongue.*] Mr. Bolton's description of the formal hypocrite, 74, 75.

Bishop Hall's character of him, 79. Who is indeed the hypocrite, 87—90. Eight directions to the hypocrite, to save him from a vain religion, 91—93. Address to the superficial opinionative hypocrite, to seek the saint's rest, XXII. 447—449. And to the worldly hypocrite, 449.

I.

IDLENESS, defined, III. 592. Signs of wealthy idleness, XII. 466—470. Its mischiefs, and reasons against it, 470—476. The sinfulness of idleness, illustrated in various particulars, III. 592—595. Especially as a waster of time, 156—158. Directions against idleness, generally, 595—600. And particularly in things spiritual, III. 611—613. What are idle thoughts, 172, 173. Directions against them, 173—181. Idleness is prodigality, VI. 373.

Idle Talk. See *Babbling.*

Idolatry, nature of, V. 471. Whether and how far it is unlawful to make use of known symbols of idolatry, 486, 487. Forbidden in the Second Commandment of the Decalogue, XIX. 174. Satan's endeavours to bring the world to idolatry, with the success, a proof of his enmity, XX. 273—277.

Idolising of man, what it is, II. 549. Directions against it, 550—576.

Ignatius, testimony of, to the observance of the Lord's-day, XIII. 386, 387.

Ignorance, the cause of falsely-pretended knowledge, XV. 150, 151. A state of ignorance not to be continued in, II. 13. Who are living in damning ignorance, 14—16. The great sinfulness of sins of ignorance, 83, 84. Extraordinary instances of ignorance, 15, *note*. Removal of it, by conversion, VII. 24. Gross ignorance of important truths, a hinderance to conversion, 265—267. Direction for remedy against it, 267—270. Ignorance, a cause of making light of Christ, XVI. 512.

Ignorant persons, how to be addressed for their good, IV. 448.

Illumination of the Holy Spirit, nature of explained, II. 104, 105. And of the illumination of the mind in conversion, VII. 24, 25.

Images, defined, and what use of them is lawful or unlawful, V. 472—482. The making of images, and pictures of God forbidden, XIX. 174, 175.

Imagination, sinfulness of, in what it consists, II. 142. A deluded imagination a cause of confidence in error, XV. 158.

Imitation of Christ, in what respects we are not to imitate him, II. 223. He is to be imitated in all his holy examples, 224—230. Wherein consists the imitation of the saints, XII. 570, 571.

Immensity of God proved, XX. 477. The practical knowledge thereof, and its effects, XIII. 28, 29.

Immortality of the soul, proofs of, briefly stated, XVIII. 16—18. Vindicated, XXI. 318—320. And demonstrated, XX. 78, 79. The immortality of the soul proved from its nature, which is a substance, XVIII. 260. And formally differenced from lower substances by virtue of special, vital activity, intellect, and free-will, 262. It is not annihilated in death, 263. Nor destroyed by dissolution of parts, *ib.* Nor does it lose its formal power or virtue, 264. Nor does it physically sleep or cease to act, 264—267. The moral sleep of the soul explained, 17. Its ceasing to be individuate by union with any other common spirit, not to be feared, were it true, which is not likely, 267—275. The immortality of the soul further proved from the duty of all men to seek future happiness, 276—278. From man's capacity of knowing God, as differenced from brutes, 278. From God's governing justice, 279. Proofs drawn up from revelation supernatural, 280, 281. From answers to prayer, 282. From communion with angels, 280—283. From Satan's temptations, witches, and apparitions, 284. From the work of the Holy Spirit on the soul, 285—298. Recapitulation of these evidences, 298. The doctrine of the immortality of the soul held by ancient and modern pagans, XXII. 208, 209. Defence of it against the Somatists and Epicureans, and other pseudo-philosophers, XXI. 415. Answer to the objections that matter and motion alone may do all that which is ascribed to souls, 418—445. That brutes, whose souls are material and mortal, partake of sense, imagination, cogitation, and reason, and therefore we cannot prove the soul to be incorporal, 445—456. That human souls are but forms, and therefore accidents, and perish when separate from the bodies, 456—460. That the soul is material, and consequently mortal, because it dependeth upon matter

in its operations, and consequently in its essence, 460, 461. That no immaterial substance moveth that which is material, as a principle of its operations, but the soul moveth the body as the principle of its operations, and therefore is not immaterial, 461—463. That the soul is no incorporal or immortal substance, because in our sleep it is either inactive, or acts irregularly and irrationally, 463. That reason is no proof of the soul's immateriality, because sense is a clearer and more excellent way of apprehension than reason, and the brutes have sense, 464. Sensation and intellection are both but reception, the passiveness, therefore, of the soul only shows its materiality, 464—466. That there is nothing in the intellect which was not first in the sense; and that as the soul cannot reach higher than to corporal, sensible things, therefore it is but such itself, 467—470. That as things corporal, work only upon corporal, and upon the soul, therefore the soul is corporal, 470. That that is not incorporal which neither knoweth itself to be incorporal nor hath any notion but negative of an incorporal being, but such is man's soul, and therefore not incorporal, 471, 472. That that which is generated is corruptible, but the soul is generated, and therefore corruptible, 472—485. That that which is not eternal, as to past duration, is not eternal as to future duration, but the soul is not eternal as to past duration, and therefore not to future duration, 485. That there are only moral arguments for the soul's immortality, 485. That we confess that the soul's eternal duration cannot be proved by any natural evidence, though we think we so prove a life of retribution, 486. That both body and soul are like a candle in *fluxu continuo*, which being the case with ourselves, we are incapable of a future retribution, 486—488. That if the soul be a durable substance, (as we must confess no substance is annihilated,) it is most likely to come from the *anima mundi*, or some soul of that orb or system of which it is a part to which it returns again, and consequently is not capable of a life of retribution, 488—491. That the doctrine of the soul's immortality is not to be suspected on account of the reveries of the Platonists and of some Platonic divines, about its future state, 491—494. That if the soul do not continue individuate, yet its actings will not be such as they now are in the body, because they have not spirits to act by, and therefore will be unfit for rewards or punishments, 494, 495. The belief of the soul's immortality proved *not* to fill men with fears, and draw them to superstition, and trouble the peace of kingdoms by sects, 495—496,

Immutability of God, proved, XX. 477.

Impatience, what is worst, XI. 391—394. Wherein lies the sinfulness of impatience towards God, 394—397.

Impenitency, signs of, IV. 359, 360. Character of the grossly impenitent, XII. 491.

Impenitent persons, form of public admonitions, to XI. 508—511. Form of prayer for a sinner impenitent, after public admonition, 512, 513. Form of rejection of one from the communion of the church, 514.

Imposition of hands. See *Hands*.

Incarnation of Christ vindicated from objections, XX. 439; XXI. 314—318.

Inclination, new, given in conversion, VII. 32—38.

Incomprehensibility of God, proved, XX. 477. The practical knowledge thereof, and its effects, XIII. 29, 30, 55, 56.

Inconsiderateness removed in conversion, VII. 25, 26. Is a hinderance of conversion, 272.

Indifferent things, what are such, and what are not, V. 59, 60; XVI. 488. Whether vows may be made of things indifferent in themselves, though not in their circumstances, V. 61, 62. Whether all indifferent things are made unlawful which are abused to idolatrous worship, 488, 489. Evils of making the unity of the church to consist in the observance of indifferent things, XVI. 489—500. What is our duty when rulers enjoin indifferent things, which others will turn into an occasion of sin and damnation, XIX. 173.

Indivisibility of God, practical knowledge of, and its effects, XIII. 24—28.

Infants, how far bound by contracts made for them in their infancy, VI. 290—292. Whether infants of believers unbaptized are members of the visible church of Christ, V. 318, 319. Whether it is certain by the word of God, that all baptized

infants dying before actual sin are undoubtedly saved, 319—333; XIX. 274. Whether they are certainly in covenant *before* baptism, and therefore in a state of salvation, or not until *after* baptism, V. 334, 335. Their title to baptism and the covenant-benefits given by God in his promise explained, 336—338; XIX. 264—266, 269—273. On whose account they have a title to baptism and its benefits, V. 341—344; XIX. 267. How the Holy Ghost is given to them in baptism, V. 345—354. Whether the right of baptized infants to the sanctifying operations of the Holy Ghost is absolute or conditional, 354—358. Infants proved to be in a state of original sin, XIII. 91—96. Discussion of the question, Whether those who were baptized in infancy should be admitted to the privileges proper to adult church-members, without confirmation or restauration, by an approved profession of personal faith, XIV. 405, 406. Proof that the infants of believers should, by baptism, be admitted into the church, and so be partakers of infant-privileges, 407—409. Although there are many privileges belonging to adult members of the church, of which infant members are not capable, yet the continuation of privileges received in infancy is part of the privileges of the adult, or the restoration of them if they be lost, 409, 410. The title-condition of infant church-membership and privileges is not the same with the title-condition and church-membership of the adult, so that if this new condition be not performed when they come to age, their former title ceases, 401—412 Whether infants are saved that have neither knowledge nor love, XV. 236, 237.

Infection of sin, signs of, III. 368, 369.

Infidelity, causes of, XXII. 204—207. Address to infidels, 207—211; XX. xxiii—xxxv.; and to those who are tempted to infidelity, xxxv., xxxvi. Infidelity does not nullify a marriage already made, though it is not lawful for a believer to marry an infidel, IV. 163. Fifteen queries, addressed to infidels, to prove that the Gospel is the word of God, X. 175—183. Infidelity destroys all souls, XII. 37. All the mercies of God, 38; and all the doctrine, law, and government of God, 39. Denies all the grace of the Spirit, *ib.* Destroys the means of salvation, *ib.* Lets loose the soul to sin, *ib.* 40. Destroys, opinionatively, the whole creation that is within the sight of man, 40. The question concerning the salvability of infidels, considered, XV. 231, 232. Refutation of infidel objections against the evidence for miracles, XX. 114—124. All sins, especially sensuality, have a natural tendency to infidelity, 198—201. Satan's course in tempting men to infidelity, 205—209. Refutation of some common objections of infidels, 422—440. The infidelity of some nominal Christians no valid objection against real Christianity, XXI. 370. Inability to answer infidel arguments no just objection against Christianity, 375, 550, 551.

Infinity of God, proved, XX. 477.

Infirmities, how distinguishable from mortal sins, VI. 336, 337. Ten temptations to take mortal sins for infirmities, with suitable directions against them, II. 81—88. Nature of sins of infirmity, IX. 144—148.

Influence, the duty of all to exert it, in persuading men to seek everlasting rest, XXIII. 114—119; especially ministers, 119—145; and parents, 145—155.

Injury, active, cases of conscience respecting, VI. 279—289. Arguments to patience under injuries from friends, XI. 415—419; and from malicious enemies, 419—421. See *Confession*.

Inquiry, neglect of serious, a hinderance to conversion, II. 258, 259.

Intellect, operations and maladies of, III. 236, 237.

Intemperance. See *Drunkenness*, *Gluttony*.

Intentions, new, given in conversion, VII. 38—44.

Intercession of Christ, one of the benefits of conversion, VII. 205—208. Mistakes concerning the intercession of Christ corrected, XII. 189, 190.

Inventions of men in matters of religion, not to discourage us, II. 140, 141. The lawfulness or unlawfulness of these considered, V. 505, 506. What are the inventions of men, which are not forbidden by the word of God, 510—514.

Invisibility of God, of the saving knowledge of, and its effects, XIII. 53—55.

Irresolution, a hinderance of conversion, VII. 298. Exhortation against it, 299.

Israelites, miraculous passage of

through the Red Sea, vindicated, XX. 437, 438.
Ithacius and *Idacius*, persecuting zeal of, censured, V. 214, 215.

J.

Jehu, observations on the awful case of, XXIV. 118, *note* [t].
JESUS CHRIST:—
I. *Person of Christ.* What is to be understood by the person of Christ, VIII. 95, 96. Impossibility of ascertaining the day and year of his nativity, XVI. 503, 504. The doctrine of Scripture, and of the Apostles' creed concerning the person of Christ, catechetically explained, XIX. 68—70. His miraculous conception and birth, 70—73. How he suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried, 73—77. His descent into hell, 77. Uses of this doctrine, 77, 78. His resurrection from the dead, 78, 81. His ascending into heaven and sitting on the right hand of God, 81—83. His second advent to judge the quick and the dead, 83, 87. The inimitable image of God visible in his person, a proof of the truth of his doctrine, XXI. 209—213. Proved to be the Messiah by his miracles, XX. 362. Refutation of the objection against the alleged late incarnation and appearance of Christ in the world, XXI. 332—335. The doctrine of his incarnation vindicated, XX. 439; XXI. 314—318; also his miraculous conception, XX. 438; XXI. 335—337; and his sufferings 337—341; and atonement, 341—343. Why he was forsaken by his disciples, XIII. 285—287. His methods against the tempter, II. 274—276.
II. *Offices of Christ:*
1. Our *Prophet* and *Teacher*, II. 222. How we are to learn of him, and imitate him, 223—238; particularly with humility, honesty, quickness, and reverence, 232, 233.
2. Our *Sovereign*:—His absolute dominion and sovereignty asserted and explained, XVII. 381—412.
3. Our *Physician*; and directions for obtaining spiritual healing by him, II. 234—258.
4. Our *Master*, II. 320—324. Our obligations as his servants, 324—332. His example a motive to forgiveness of enemies, VI. 153.
5. Our *Mediator*:—Importance of deeply apprehending the gracious nature and mediatorial office of Christ, IX. 33, 34; XIII. 12. How we are to live a life of faith in Christ, as our Mediator, II. 175—178; XII. 189—201.
6. Our *God-Redeemer*:—With what price he bought us, and of whom, XVII. 343, 344. For whom, and for what purpose, 344—349. See *Redemption.*
III. *His Work.*—The ends of the redemption wrought by him, VIII. 96—108. What are the works of redemption which he hath done, 113—117. The benefits procured by him, generally, to mankind, 118—120. And specially to believers, 120—127. Upon what terms they are conveyed to man, 128—131. The certainty thereof, 131. The full sufficiency of his sacrifice and ransom for all, IX. 35. The aptness of Christ's teaching to produce the love of God and holiness, XV. 218, 219. What humble manifestations of his kingdom Christ gave in his transfiguration, XVIII. 462—502. The doctrine of the necessity of Christ's satisfaction explained, XX. viii.—xv. See *Enmity*, I.
IV. Our *Duties, &c. in relation to Jesus Christ*:—He is to be wholly relied on as our Head, Life, Saviour, and Intercessor, II. 57—60. How we are to make use of Christ by faith, in twenty necessities, II. 178—188. Lawfulness of bowing at the name of Jesus, considered, 439. Union to Christ one of the benefits of conversion, VII. 193—195; also the having of the Spirit of Christ, 199; and his intercession, 205—208. The conversion of sinners a source of joy to him, 227, 228. How Christ is to be received understandingly, VIII. 95—131. Heartily, and with the will, 132—137. And entirely, 137—142, 268—270. His coming in glory, how to be rightly contemplated by faith, XII. 579—591. Self-ignorance causes Christ to be undervalued, XVI. 41. What it is to make light of Christ and his doctrine, 510. Its sinfulness, 510—512. The causes of it, 512—518. How faithful souls are his servants, XVIII. 126, 127. And followers, 127—132. And will be where he is, 132—142. And honoured by his Father, 142, 143. What it is to be with Christ, 298—306. What it is to depart and be with Christ, 306. And why to be preferably chosen, 337—394.
Jonah's deliverance from the whale's belly vindicated, XX. 438.

Josephus's testimony to Jesus Christ, remarks on XXI. 297, *note*.
Joy, the subjection of devils how a source of joy to the apostles, XVII. 156, 157. Why Christians are not to rejoice in external things, 160—163. And why they should rejoice because their names are written in heaven, 163—165. St. Paul's finishing his course with joy explained, XVIII. 65. How much of this joy a faithful minister may expect, 66, 67. Whence and on what accounts they may expect it, 67. Why Paul counted not his life dear, so that he might but finish his course with joy, 69, 70. Directions to private Christians, to finish their course with joy, 83—85. God's testimonies, in what sense the joy and heritage of believers, 93—97. How far they are their joy, 98—100.
Judas, the desperation of, considered, IX. 120.
Judge of controversies in matters of religion, who, V. 311—315. When the magistrate and the minister differ on controversial matters, which is to be obeyed, VI. 56. Duty of judges and juries, 380, 381. The Romish doctrine of an infallible judge of controversies refuted, XVI. 354—358; XXII. 214—216.
Judges (civil), their duty, XVII. 374. Address to them, 407—410.
Judging of others. See *Conscientiousness*.
Judgment, necessity of sound, in order to be truly religious, II. 95, 96. The evil of unrighteous judgments, VI. 383, 384. Directions against forming them, 384—386. The power of selfishness on the partiality with which men judge in their own cases, 103—109. Importance of suspending our judgments till we have true evidence to establish them, XV. 77, 79. Advantages of a suspended judgment, 120—122. Mistaking the nature of the duty of submitting our judgment to our superiors, a cause of falsely-pretended knowledge, 157.
Judgment, the last, what, XVII. 425. Catechetically explained, XIX. 83—87. Meditation on it, a remedy for pride, III. 57. A means of furnishing the mind with good thoughts, 193. Who will be the judge, XVII. 425—428. Who are to be judged, 428, 429. Who will be the accuser, 429. How sinners will be called to the bar, 430. By what law men will be judged, 431. What will be the accusation, 432—434. The evidence to be adduced, 434—450. By what excuses unrighteous men may attempt to defend themselves, 450—475. What the sentence will be, 475. Especially to the righteous, 476—481. And to the wicked, 481—489. The execution of the judgment, 489—492. Uses of this doctrine, 492—499. Five marks by which to know who will be justified, and who will be condemned, at the day of judgment, 499, 500. Directions to prepare for the day of judgment, 502—507.
Judgments, national, arguments and helps for patience under, XI. 502—507. Faith, how to be exercised on God's judgments, XII. 287—296.
Juries, address to, XVII. 376, 410—412.
Jurisdiction in the church, in the succession of ministers, whether necessary to the being of a church, V. 276—279.
Justice of God, nature of, XIII. 136, 137. Cases of conscience respecting justice in contracts, VI. 289—306. And also respecting buying and selling, 306—314. Offices of justice, or of magistracy, whether they may be bought, 301, 302. The pleasure arising from performing works of justice, X. 329. Distinction between justice and charity, XIX. 251, 252.
Justices of the peace, directions to (especially in corporations), for the discharge of their duty to God, XV. 539—544.
Justification, nature of, XVIII. 503, 504; XIX. 103. On the promises of pardon of, XII. 266. How to exercise faith about it, 297—311. Whether it is perfect before death, VI. 522. And as to all past sins, *ib.*, 523. Whether justification may be reversed or lost, 523. How far a weak Christian may take the judgment of others about his justification, 527. The knowledge of our justification to be distinguished from the comfort of it, 529. Detection of pernicious and dangerous errors, which hinder the work of faith about our justification, and the contrary truths asserted, XII. 311—351. Who are justified, XVIII. 503. Their privileges, 504—507.
Justin Martyr, testimony of, to the observance of the Lord's-day, XIII. 388.

K.

KEYS of the church, pastoral power of, XIX. 141, 142.
Kidderminster, address of Mr. Baxter to the inhabitants of, on the publication of his Treatise on Conversion, VII. iii.—vii. And also of his Call to

the Unconverted, ccexxxii.—cccliii. Address to them, on his being forbidden to preach in the diocese of Worcester, by Dr. George Morley, then bishop there, XVI. xxvii.—xxxii. His farewell sermon to them, XVIII. 196—237. Dedication of it to them, 195. His grounds of thankfulness, at the prospect of departing from them, 231—233. Valedictory advices to them, 233—237. Dedication of his 'Saint's Rest' to them, with pastoral advices to them, XXII. 1—14.

Killing of another in self-defence, in what cases lawful, VI. 165—167.

King:—God our Sovereign King, and subjection to him as such, our duty, II. 207—209. The kingdom of God explained, XIX. 17—19. Directions for bringing the soul into full subjection to God, II. 209—220. The oath acknowledging the king's supremacy may be lawfully taken, VI. 54, 55. And without confounding church and state, 55. The king's power in cases of church discipline stated, 55, 56. If kings and bishops differ, who are to be obeyed, 56—59. Form of public prayer for the king and royal family, XV. 462, 463.

Kingdom of God, what is meant by, XIX. 134, 135. Import of the petition in the Lord's Prayer, 'Thy kingdom come,' 135—144. Why 'the kingdom, the power, and the glory,' are ascribed to God, 157.

Kingdom of Heaven, nature of, VII. 17, 18. Explanation of Matt. xviii. 3, concerning it, 15—17.

Kingdom of love, or of the Holy Ghost, different from the reign of the Creator and Redeemer, whether any to be expected, V. 556, 557.

Kissing the Son, import of, XVII. 383. Nature of the subjection to Christ, which it implies, 384. Why this is the only way to escape the wrath of God, 385, 386. No power on earth can save him who does not kiss the Son, 387. Exhortations to this duty, 394—396. Aggravations of the sin of neglecting it, 396—399. And of the punishment, 399—407.

Kneeling at the Lord's supper, not unlawful, IV. 331. The lawfulness of kneeling when the decalogue is read, considered, V. 440.

KNOWLEDGE, in general, how to be estimated, II. 13. Unnecessary knowledge, and delight therein, how to be denied, XI. 214—219.

1. *Knowledge of God*, importance of, II. 199, 200. Catechetically explained, XVIII. 524—527; XIX. 15—21. Special importance of the practical knowledge of God, XII. 174, 175. How attainable by us, II. 201. A means of furnishing the mind with good thoughts, III. 183. The knowledge of the only true God, and of Jesus Christ the Mediator, is the life of grace, and the necessary way to the life of glory, XIII. 12, 13. What is contained in this saving knowledge, as to the act and object, 13—18. A short scheme of the divine properties and attributes to be known, 19—21. Of the knowledge of God's being, 22. What impress it must make upon the soul, 23, 24. Of the knowledge of God's unity and indivisibility, 24—28. And its effects, 28. Of the knowledge of God's immensity, and its effects, 28, 29. Of his incomprehensibility, and its effects, 29, 30. Of his omnipresence, and its effects, 31. Of his all-sufficiency, and its effects, *ib.* Of his particular providence, and its effects, 32—34. Of the eternity of God, and its effects, 35—50. Of the knowledge of God, as a Spirit, simple and uncompounded, 50—53. Invisible, 53—55. Immortal, incorruptible, and immutable, 55, 56. Of the knowledge of God's omnipotence, and its due effects, 56—63. Of his infinite wisdom or omniscience, 63—71. Of his infinite goodness and love, and of the due impression thereof, on the soul, 71—81. Of the knowledge of God as the first great Cause, Creator, and Preserver of all things, 81—91. Of the knowledge of God as our Redeemer, 91—105. Of God the Holy Ghost as our Sanctifier and Comforter, 105—114. As the absolute Owner, Proprietary, or Lord of all, 114—120. As our Sovereign Governor, or King, 120—128. As our most loving Father, 129—135. Of the knowledge of the freedom of God, 135. Of the justice of God, and its effects, 136. Of the holiness of God, and its necessary effects, 137—142. Of his veracity, truth, and faithfulness, 142—148. Of his mercifulness, including his patience and long-suffering, and the necessary uses and effects thereof, 148—151. And of his dreadfulness or terribleness, and its necessary uses and effects, 151—154.

II. *Of falsely-pretended knowledge*:—What pretended knowledge is condemned by St. Paul, VIII. 2, 3; XV. 19—32. What are the unknown things and uncertainties, of which

we must not pretend a certain knowledge, 47—67. Inferences from the uncertainty of falsely-pretended knowledge; the true reason and usefulness of Christian simplicity in differencing the covenant and principles of religion from the rest of the Holy Scriptures, 67—74. The use of catechising, 75. The preserving of puzzled Christians from the errors of false teachers, 76—84. Falsely-pretended knowledge and faith, the great plague and divider of the Christian world, 84—107. The signs of a proud, self-conceited understanding, and of pretended knowledge, 107—113. Mischievous effects of proudly pretending to more knowledge than men have, 113—120. Advantages of a suspended judgment, which pretends to no more knowledge or certainty than it actually hath, 120—122. Aggravations of the sin of presumption arising from pretended knowledge, 122—125. Especially in students and pastors, 126—128. Proofs of the little knowledge that is in the world, urged as a motive for the due distrust of our understandings, 128—139. Causes of proud, pretended knowledge, 150. Ignorance, *ib.*, 151. Pride, 151—153. Want of a tender conscience, 124. Blind zeal, *ib.* Inordinate trust in man, *ib.* Insufficient acquaintance with the corruption of man's nature, 155, 156. Early-contracted prejudices, 156, 157. Mistaking the nature of the duty of submitting our judgment to our superiors, 157. Slothfulness, *ib.* Being deterred from truth, *ib.* Confidence in false conceits, *ib.*, 158. A deluded imagination, *ib.* Conversing only with those of our own mind and interest, 159. Malignity and want of Christian love, *ib.* Objections to these impediments answered, 160—173. Directions for the cure of pretended knowledge or self-conceit, 173. Labour to understand the true nature and principles of certainty, *ib.* Discern the helps of knowledge from knowledge itself, *ib.* Trust not artificial forms of argument, to the exclusion of the evidence of the truth itself, 174. Take truths in order, *ib.* Let the great radical verities have your greatest confidence, 175. Keep all perceptions distinct, *ib.* Look to all things, or to as many as possible, *ib.* Conclude not hastily of negatives, 176. Suspect first apprehensions of things, 177. Choose such teachers as have themselves attained the things you seek, *ib.* Value truth for goodness, and goodness above truth, *ib.* As many smaller parts of knowledge, though necessary to kingdoms, academies, and churches, are not necessary to individuals, let a few particular persons be trained to eminency in such studies, 178. Value, digest, and live upon, the most necessary truths, *ib.* Study hard, and search diligently, 179. Beware of the bias of carnal interest, 180. Cherish unfeigned love to others, *ib.* Reverence the church of God, but give not your own understandings up absolutely to any men, *ib.* Fear error, and ungrounded confidence, 181. Pray and labour for a humble mind, 182. Keep in a child-like, teachable resolution, with a sober and suspended judgment, where there is no sure evidence to turn the scales, 182—184.

III. *Of true, saving knowledge:*—Knowledge, a means to a higher end, according to which it is to be estimated, XV. 186. This proved from the order and use of the faculties of the soul, 186—189. From the objects to be known, 189. From the constitution of the acts, 190. And from Scripture, *ib.*, 191. The end of knowledge is to make us lovers of God, and so to be known with love by him, 191—199. Knowledge is to be valued, sought, and used, as it tendeth to our love of God, 199—202. And therefore those are to be accounted the wisest and best knowing men who love God most, and not those who are stored with unholy knowledge, 202—205. Inferences resulting from the possession of true, saving knowledge; (1.) By what measures to estimate knowledge, 206. (2.) To abate our censures and contempt of less learned Christians and churches, 207—209. (3.) How to judge of the knowledge necessary to church-communion, 209—218. (4.) The aptness of Christ's teaching, to produce the love of God and holiness, 218, 219. (5.) Our obligation to be grateful, on account of the excellent constitution of the Christian religion, 220—223. (6.) How little reason ungodly men have to be proud of their learning, or of any sort of knowledge or wisdom whatsoever, 223, 224. (7.) Why

the ungodly world hateth holiness, and not learning, 225—227. (8.) What is the work of a faithful preacher, and how it is to be done, 228, 229. (9.) Those who love God supremely, may have comfort notwithstanding their remaining ignorance, 229, 230. Questions and objections answered, 231—237. Practical uses of saving knowledge; (1.) Not to deceive ourselves by overvaluing a dead or an unholy knowledge, 237—243. (2.) Love the best Christians that have most love to God and man, 244, 245. (3.) Plead not against love or works of love on pretence of a cross-interest of learning, knowledge, gifts, &c., or any other thing, 245—249. (4.) Bend all studies and labours to the exercise and increase of love, both of God and man, and of all good works, 250—262. (5.) Place your comforts in health and in sickness, in mutual, divine love, 262—269. Importance of having a true conception of God, as he must be loved, 269—273. And of knowing practically how love must be exercised upon him, 273—285. Let the chief part of your comfort be, that you are known of God, 285, 286. The unspeakable comfort of being thus known, in life and in death, 286—295.

L.

LABOUR, a life of, whether necessary to all, III. 577. What labour is necessary, 578. Whether religion will excuse us from labour, *ib.* Or riches, 579. Why labour is necessary, *ib.*, 580—582. A stated calling necessary for the right performance of our labours, 582.

Landlords, conduct of, to their tenants, several cases of conscience respecting, VI. 357—363.

Lascivious speech to be avoided, III. 457.

Law or laws, definition of, V. 306. Compassionate counsels to students of law, in London, XV. 383—385,

Law of Moses, whether abrogated, and not to be read in the church, V. 544, 545. It was obligatory only on the Jews, XIII. 417. Whether it bound other nations besides the Jews, V. 546—548. It was not to last for ever, 555. How it is abrogated by Christ, XIII. 418, 419. Proof that it was from God, XIX. 30, 31.

Law of Nature defined, V. 554. Whether it contradicts the Scriptures, and which of the two is the standard whereby to try the other, *ib.* Whether every word in the decalogue be of the law of nature, and of perpetual obligation, and whether all that was of the law of nature was in the decalogue, XIII. 504—507. The law of nature explained, XIX. 21—26.

Laws of Men, whether binding upon the conscience, VI. 69, 96. Whether disobedience to penal laws be a sin against God, though a man submit to the penalty of them, 69—71. 98—100.

Law-Suits, in what case it is right or wrong to prosecute, VI. 163, 164, 377. Various cases of conscience respecting law-suits, 378, 379. The evil of contentious and unjust law-suits, 381. Directions about going to law, 384—386.

Lawyers, direction to, to study the doctrine of polity and laws, VI. 104, 105. Motive to be kept in view by them, 105, 106. Caution not to be advocates against God, 106—108. Should make the cause of the innocent their own, 108. And watch against professional temptations, *ib.* Address to them, XVII. 410—412.

Laying on of hands. See *Hands*.

Laymen, baptism by, whether lawful in cases of necessity, V. 364. Whether their baptism is null, and the person so baptized must be re-baptized, 364, 365. Whether any part of the proper pastoral or episcopal power may be given or deputed to a layman, or be performed by him, 397—399. Whether a layman may preach or expound the Scriptures, 399. Whether the trial, judgment, or consent of the laity is necessary to the admittance of a member into the universal or particular church, 402—404. What acts of public worship may be performed by them, where there is no minister, 540.

Laziness, sinfulness of, XI. 195—199. Must be denied, 199—201.

Learning, human; whether to be cultivated by Christians, V. 552, 553. How little reason ungodly men have to boast of their learning, XV. 223, 224. The importance of having human learning, notwithstanding the witness and helps of the Spirit, XX. 183—198.

Lectures, weekly, whether inferiors are to forbear attending them, at the command of their superiors, V. 467, 468.

Lending, when a duty, VI. 327. Cases

of conscience respecting, and borrowing, 315—328.
Lent, fast of, whether lawful to be observed, V. 455, 456.
Liberality, or freedom from covetousness, counterfeits of, III. 74—77.
Libertines, opinions of some, stated, II. 154.
Libertinism, doctrine of, not to be received as from the Gospel, II. 153—157.
Liberty of the people, nature of, VI. 95. True nature of the liberty of man's will, II. 235. Examination of the case of liberty in matters of religion, VI. 168—202. Nature of holy liberty, XI. 223. Of carnal liberty which must be denied, 223—226. And of common, natural, and civil liberty, and when this must be denied, 226—229.
Libraries, for different classes of persons, lists of books for, with remarks, V. 587—602.
Life, long, not to be promised to ourselves, II. 161—163. Directions for glorifying God in our lives, 448—457. Uncertainty of life, a motive for redeeming time, III. 136, 137. And also the ends for which life is given to us by God, 138, 139. This life our only season of preparation for eternity, 139. The groundless expectation of long life, a great hinderance to the redeeming of time, 155. The difference between a contemplative life and an obedient active life, with directions concerning them, 211—217. The change, wrought in the life by conversion, described, VII. 98—119. The scandalous lives of professors of religion, a hinderance of conversion, 292, 293. Natural life, how to be denied, XI. 236—241. Twenty reasons for denying life, 241—264. What there is so desirable in this life, and the uses to be derived from it, XVIII. 244—253.
Life of Faith. See *Faith*, III.
Light, Christians how the light of the world, XVII. 190, 191. Doctrines thence resulting, 191, 192. What light must shine in our works. See *Works*.
Light and darkness, creation of, before the sun, explained, XX. 435.
Liturgy of the Church of England. See *Common Prayer*.
Liturgy, the reformed, proposed by Mr. Baxter, XV. 451. Ordinary public worship on the Lord's-day, *ib*. First or introductory prayer, *ib*., 452. A shorter form, when brevity is necessary, *ib*. Sentences introductory to the confession, 453. A confession of sins, and prayer for pardon and sanctification, *ib*, 454—457. A shorter form when brevity is necessary, 457, 458. Sentences for the encouragement of penitents, 458, 459. Declaration what we must be and do, in order to salvation, 459—461. Order of Psalms, Lessons, Sermon, &c., 461, 462. Prayer for the king, royal family, and magistrates, 462, 463. The general prayer, 463—465. Thanksgiving for Christ and his gracious benefits, 467—470. A hymn of praise, in the words of Scripture, 470—472. Order of celebrating the Lord's supper, 472. Explication of its nature, &c., 472—475. The exhortation, 475—477. The prayer, 477—479. The blessing of the bread and wine, 479. Mode of consecration, 480—482. Prayer after participation, 482, 483. Concluding exhortation, 483, 484. Form of celebration of the Sacrament of Baptism, 484—492. Of catechising, and the approbation of those who are to be admitted to the Lord's supper, 492—494. Form of celebrating matrimony, 494—496. Visitation of the sick, and their communion. 497. Order of solemnizing the burial of the dead, 497, 498. Of extraordinary days of humiliation and thanksgiving, and anniversary festivals, 498, 499. Prayers and thanksgivings for particular members of the church, 499, 500. For the sick, where there are hopes of recovery, 500—502. For women drawing near the time of child-bearing, 502. Thanksgiving for those restored from dangerous sickness, 502, 503. And for the deliverance of women in child-bearing, 503, 504. Of the public exercise of pastoral discipline, confession, absolution, and exclusion from the communion of the church, 504—511. Form of confession to be made by the offender before the congregation, 511. Prayer for a sinner impenitent, after public admonition, 512, 513. Form of rejection from the communion of the church, 514. Form of absolution and reception of the penitent, 514, 515. Form of thanksgiving for the restored penitent, 515, 516. The church's praise for redemption, to be used at discretion, 523—527. For a discussion of various questions relative to the lawfulness of using liturgies or precomposed forms of prayer:—See *Forms* of Prayer.
Litany, form of, to be used at a minister's discretion, XV. 517—523.

Logical truth defined, III. 508. Whether it is always a sin to speak a logical falsehood, 510, 511.

London Apprentices, compassionate counsel to:—See *Young Men*.

Loquacity, aggravations of the sin of, III. 539—542.

LORD'S DAY, or *SABBATH*, some evidences and arguments for the observance of, IV. 240—242. Vast importance of its due observation, XIII. 458—463. The fourth commandment of the decalogue concerning it, explained, XIX. 185—196.

I. *On the divine appointment of the Lord's day*, XIII. 369; XXIII. 325, and *note*. The question stated, 370. Proofs that the Apostles did actually appoint the first day of the week for holy worship? 380—382; and that the Christian church has ever since assembled for public worship on this day, as a day set apart by the Apostles, 385—405. This evidence of the church's universal constant usage is a full and sufficient proof of the matter of fact, that it was a day set apart by the Apostles for holy worship, 406—408. And that they so appointed it by the special guidance of the Holy Ghost, 414, 415.

II. *The Seventh Day, Sabbath, proved not to be still kept by Christians as of Divine obligation*, because it is not enjoined by the law of nature, XIII. 416. Nor by the positive law made to Adam or Noah, *ib.*, 417. Nor by the fourth commandment of the decalogue, 417—428. Answer to certain objections against the Lord's day, 467—482; and to various arguments urged in behalf of the seventh day, Sabbath, 482—496. Whether the seventh day, Sabbath, be part of the law of nature or only a positive law, 496—504. Whether the truest antiquity be for the seventh day, Sabbath, as kept by the churches of Christ, 508.

III. *Of the Celebration of the Lord's Day*:—When the Lord's day begins, XIII. 428. How the Lord's day should not be spent, 438—451. What things should not be scrupled as unlawful on the Lord's day, 452—458. Some general directions for the celebration of the Lord's day, in public, V. 433; XIII. 429—433. And in families, 433, 434. And in private, 434, 435. Address to those who account this day a weariness, 435—438. Particular directions for the celebration of the Lord's day:—The praise of God, a special duty on this day, II. 445. The whole of it to be spent in a holy manner, IV. 243. The design of this day, 244. Its special work, to celebrate the memorial of Christ's resurrection, *ib.* And for the public worship of God, 245. To be celebrated with gladness, 246. What outward rest is necessary on this day, 246—248. Directions for the order of holy duties on this day, 248—251. Whether it may be lawfully kept as a fast, V. 432. A form of praise and prayer for the Lord's day, VII. 459—464. To be kept by ministers and Christians as a day of thanksgiving, IX. 281. Form of public prayers and service for the Lord's day, XV. 451—472.

Lord's Prayer, by whom composed, XIX. 122. The method of, briefly explained, IV. 287—289; XIX. 122, 123. Whether it is a directory only, or a form of words to be used by us in prayer, IV. 289, 290. Whether we must always pray according to the method of this prayer, and whether it is a sin to do otherwise, 293, 294. Whether a wicked man may pray the Lord's prayer, or be exhorted to use it, 296, 297. What need is there of any other form, if this be perfect, 290. An exposition of it in the form of a morning prayer, VII. 466—469. How to be the rule of our desires and prayers, XII. 515. The Lord's prayer catechetically explained, XIX. 124—158.

LORD'S SUPPER, or sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, doctrine of, briefly explained, XIX. 274—287.

I. *Its Nature*, XIX. 274. Proper ends for which it was instituted, IV. 312. Mistaken ends to be avoided, 313; XIX. 515, 516. Profanation of it, IV. 314. Consists of three parts, viz., Consecration, 315; XIX. 274, 275: the representation and commemoration of the sacrifice of Christ, IV. 316; XIX. 280, 281: and the communion or communication by Christ, and reception by the people, IV. 316; XIX. 281—284, 517, 518. Whether the Lord's Supper be a converting ordinance, V. 446.

II. *Preparation for receiving it*, general directions for, IV. 317, 318; XIX. 519, 521. What degree is necessary, IV. 318, 319. What particular preparation is requisite for the communicant, 325. *First*, his duty with his own conscience and heart, *ib.*, 326, 327. *Secondly*, his duty towards God, 327. *Thirdly*, his duty

towards his neighbour, 329. How often it is to be administered, 319, 320. Whether all the members of the visible church are to be admitted to it, 320. Knowledge and common gifts, without true repentance, ought to exclude, *ib.* May an ungodly man receive it, who does not know himself to be ungodly, *ib.* May one that doubts of his sincerity receive it, 321, 322. The case of superiors compelling such a Christian to communicate, or else they will excommunicate and imprison him, 322, 323. Wherein lies the sin of an hypocrite and ungodly person, if he receive, 324. What unworthy receiving makes a man liable to damnation, *ib.*, 325. The duty of pastors in examining the people before the sacrament, V. 446. Whether a man may come to it who is doubtful of the sincerity of his faith and repentance, 447, 448. Oblations, whether to be joined to the sacrament, and how, 448, 449. Order of celebrating it, XV. 472—482. Self-acquaintance necessary to receive it aright, XVI. 96.

III. *Duties at and after the time of receiving*:—Graces are to be exercised, IV. 334. What is objectively presented in the sacrament to exercise these graces, 334—336. At what seasons, during the administration, each of these graces is to be exercised, and how, 336—342. What regard is to be had to the minister and manner of administration, 328. Duties of the communicant after receiving the Lord's supper, 334.

IV. *Ecclesiastical Questions of discipline, &c. respecting the administration of the Lord's Supper*:—Whether we may receive it from an unworthy minister, 329. And communicate with unworthy persons, or in an undisciplined church, 329, 330. Even with wicked men, V. 407. Whether we may communicate under an imposed form of administration and gesture, IV. 331—333. Whether all the members of the church have a right to the Lord's supper, 408—410. The pleasure of communion with Christ and his church in the sacrament, X. 316—323.

Losing, and finding, cases of conscience respectiug, VI. 330—332.

LOVE defined, II. 459—461. Objects of love, 462, 463. Importance of it to a Christian minister, XIV. 128—130.

1. *Love to God*, nature of, explained, II. 353—356. Different kinds of, 357. Its reasons, 357, 358. Degrees and effects, XV. 191—193. Contraries to it, II. 359, 360; and the counterfeits of it, 360, 361. The love of God the very end for which we are created, redeemed, and regenerated, 361, 363. God alone perfectly fit to be the object of our love, 363—365. His nearness to us an additional motive to the love of God, 365—366. All other graces must be exercised in subservience to it, 366, 367. Want of love to God to be deplored, 368—373. Disappointments, injuries, and afflictions, to be improved to the promoting of love to God, 372, 373. The goodness and excellencies of God an inducement to love him, 373—375. God is to be loved in his appearances to man in the ways or works of nature, 375—378. Of grace, 378—384. And of glory, 384, 385. The soul to be frequently exercised in meditating on the love of God, 386. Question concerning the assurance of our love to God considered, 387—389. The sense of natural and friendly love to be improved, in order to raise us to the love of God, 390. The delight of living in this love, 390—392. The various incentives of love to be preached over to our hearts, 392—395. The true doctrine of love to God, to ourselves, and others, opened in certain propositions, with solutions of various questions and cases, 459—494. A sense of the love of God a means of furnishing the mind with good thoughts, III. 185, 186. How God doth love his enemies, explained, XV. 194. And all that love him, 195. Some doubts concerning his love, answered, 196—198. Those who love God most are to be accounted the most knowing, 202—205. The aptness of Christ's teaching to produce the love of God, 218, 219. The excellence of the love of God, 250—256. Directions for attaining it, 256—262. Importance of practically knowing how love must be exercised towards God, 273—281.

2. *Love of God*, what is meant by, XVIII. 507—511. On the saving knowledge of, and its due impress upon the soul, XIII. 71—81. Short meditations on the shedding abroad God's love on the heart by the Holy Ghost, 511—518. The nature of the love of God explained, XIX. 341—

345. The cherishing a constant sense of it, a help to a heavenly life, XXIII. 305, 306.

3. *Love to the godly*, cases of conscience respecting, VI. 436—444. Directions for this love, 444—446. Hinderances to the exercise of Christian love, 448—451. Its counterfeits exposed, 452, 453. Love of the children of God as such, a mark of Christian sincerity, XXIII. 41—43.

4. *Love of the creature*, what, III. 261. Helps for the discovery of sinful love, 262—264; and for mortifying sinful love, 264—268. How far it is lawful or unlawful to be loved by others, VI. 453—455. The love of others, how to be denied, XI. 278, 279.

5. *Love, conjugal*, directions for maintaining it, IV. 117—119.

6. *Love of our enemies*, cases of conscience respecting, VI. 469—472. Motives to this duty, 472—474. Directions for it, 474—476.

7. *Love of our neighbour*, questions of conscience respecting, VI. 425—428. The extent of this duty, 429—431. Directions for the performance of it, 431—433. Motives for this love, 433—436. How to live by faith in the love of one another, XII. 525—541. Nature of catholic love, XVI. 361—365. How we are to love our neighbours as ourselves, XIX. 245, 246. How we may increase it, 250, 251.

8. *Love of the world*, a hinderance of conversion, VII. 284, 285. Directions against it, 285, 286.

Love-songs, to be denied, XI. 165—168.

Lusory Contracts, cases of conscience respecting, VI. 328—330.

Lust, called love, means for quenching, IV. 24, 25. Directions against inward, filthy lusts, III. 451—462. The necessity of denying lustful inclinations, XI. 163—165.

Luther:—Answer to the question of the Papists, 'Where was your church before Luther?' XVI. 325—327.

Luxury, how to escape the sin of, by faith, XII. 452—460.

Lyford (Mr.), objections to the author's discourse of the sin against the Holy Ghost examined and answered, XX. 380—394.

Lying is the voluntary assertion of a falsehood, III. 514. Its aggravations, *ib.* 515. Two degrees of it, 515. Its sinfulness and evil consequences, 515—520. Directions for avoiding this sin, 520—526. And for saving others from it, 526. Whether frequent, known lying is a certain sign of a graceless state, 527—529. Whether it is not contrary to the light of nature to suffer a parent, a king, myself, or my country, to be destroyed, rather than to save them by a harmless lie, 529, 530. Whether deceit by action, which seemeth a practical lie, be lawful, 531. Whether it is lawful to tempt a child or servant to lie, merely to try them, 532. Lying abominable in the sight of God, XIII. 146. The ninth commandment respecting lying explained, XIX. 236—244.

M.

MAGI (Persian), tenets of, II. 173, *note* [b].

Magistrates, specially bound to redeem time, III. 170. Whether the magistrate or the bishop have the first and chief power of imposing a minister on a people, V. 275. In what sense it is true, as some say, that the magistrate only has the external government of the church, and pastors the internal, 401, 402. Of the power of the magistrate to remove the pastor from one place to another, though the bishop and people oppose it, 458—460. Whether the magistrates may reform a corrupted church, 462, 463. Their power in appointing days of public humiliation and thanksgiving, 464. Whether they may forbid church assemblies on the Lord's-day, 465. Or are to be obeyed if they forbid meeting in a particular place, country, or number, &c. 466, 467. Of the authority of the civil magistrate in controversies of faith or worship, VI. 53, 54. Their power in judging of the admission of church-members, XIV. 445—448. It is a great part of their duty to cause those who are unfit for church-communion to live quietly as expectants, and submit to be instructed, 450—452. And to compel ministers to instruct them, and see that great parishes have a fit number of able teachers to do it, 552. To impose a penalty on pastors that will not guide the church by discipline as well as preach, 552, 553. To promote and command associations of ministers and churches, and for what ends, 554. To appoint civil visitors, and visitors of the ministry, and with what powers, *ib.* It is their duty to re-

strain seducers from taking advantage of discontents, and drawing away expectants of admission to church-membership, 555. Ten reasons for this, 555—560. Certain regulations of toleration propounded to magistrates who are afraid of persecution, 560—562. Compassionate counsel to the sons of magistrates, XV. 385—389. Duties of private men towards them, XVII. 313—316; XIX. 500. They are bound to do good to many, XVII. 321—323.

Making light of Christ, what, XVI. 510. Its sinfulness, 510—512. Why men make light of Christ, 512—518. The dangerous consequences of this conduct, 518, 519. Arguments for the conviction of those who are guilty of making light of Christ, 522—533. Directions for escaping this sin, 533—538.

Muhometanism, account of, XX. 288, 291. The work of Satan, 291, 292. Examination of it, XXI. 143, 144, 241.

Malice, directions against, VI. 142—153.

Malignity, and want of Christian love, a cause of falsely-pretended knowlege, XV. 159. See '*Cain and Abel Malignity.*'

Man, relation of God to, as his Owner, according to the principles of natural religion, XX. 489—492. Man's relation and duties to God as his Owner, 493—495. Of God's relation to man as his moral Governor, 495—522. Of man's relation to God, or subjection to him, as his Ruler, XXI. 1—5. Relation of God to man as his Chief Good, 17—38. And of man's duty to God, 38—52. Difficulty of his performing this duty, and what it will cost a man that will live a holy life, 52—57. The precepts of Christianity adapted to promote the benefit of all men, 352—354.

Man, directions against the sinful fear of, III. 305—316. His destruction proved to be of himself, VII. 436—441. The heinous aggravations of his self-destruction, 441—443.

Man-pleasing, what it is, II. 549. Directions against it, 550—559. The impossibility of it shown from their number, various characters, and tempers, 560—564. From the imperfection and contrariety of their judgments, 564, 567, 568. Their mutability, 565. Their perverseness, 566. Their proneness to calumny, 568, 569. Hatred to holy men and to piety, 570. Their displeasure against God, and inability to please themselves, 571, 572.

Manslaughter, what reparation is to be made for, VI. 515.

Marriage, what degrees of consanguinity are prohibited in, XIX. 225. What to be considered before we enter into the marriage state, IV. 1, 2. What persons have a call from God to marry, and who have not his approbation, 3—5. The question considered if parents command a person to marry, or will act against the party in case of disobedience, 6. The case of a corporal necessity, with a forethought of the disadvantages of matrimony as to the service of God, and the party's salvation, 6. The question considered, if parents forbid marriage to one that cannot live chastely without it, or when affections are unconquerable, 7, 8. If a child have promised marriage, and the parents are against it, 9, 10. How far such promise must be kept, 10, 11. The inconveniences and troubles of a married life to be considered by those who need restraint, 13—20. Especially by ministers of the Gospel, 20—22. Directions for the choice of a husband or wife, 23—25, 29, 30. Several cases considered, of marrying with an ungodly person, 25—29. The comforts and helps of marriage, 30. Religious considerations to be attended to in marriage, 31, 32. What rule is to be followed about prohibited degrees of consanguinity—whether the law of Moses or of nature, or the laws of the land or church, &c., 32, 33. What is to be done if the law of the land forbid more or fewer degrees than the law of Moses, 33. The marriage of cousins-german not unlawful, 33, 34. What cousins-german are to do, who, having been married, entertain doubts concerning the lawfulness of their marriage, 34. What those persons must do after their marriage, who are married in the degrees not prohibited by name in Levit. xviii., and yet are of the same degree of nearness, and seem to have the same reason of unlawfulness, 34, 35. If they marry in a degree forbidden, may not necessity make it lawful to continue it, as it made lawful the marriage of Adam's sons and daughters, 35, 36. Infidelity does not nullify a marriage already made, 163. Marrying or not marrying,

whether it may be made the subject of a vow, V. 60, 61.
Martha, Christ's reproof of, briefly explained, X. 29, 30, 32. Some practical remarks thereon, 33—35. The nature of Martha's sin more fully explained, 408. Whether we are not likely to be more guilty of the same sin, *ib.* 409. In what instances our sin is far worse than Martha's, 409—415. What are the common excuses of this sin, 415—417. What is the evil of it which deserves such reproof, 417—420. What are the uses which we should make of this reproof, 420—427. Remarks on her accusation of Mary, and Christ's vindication of the latter, 442, 462. Recommendation of this subject to the unjust accusers of the godly, 443—453. To those who are unjustly accused, 453—457. And to those who are in doubt what cause to choose, 457—462. Practical uses of the whole, 462—472.
Mass (Romish), whether it be lawful to go to it, V. 265. Origin of it, and refutation thereof, XIX. 278—280.
Masters, directions to, for the choice of servants, IV. 40—43. What servants are to them, 203—208. The special duties of masters to their servants, 209—211; XIX. 209, 210, 498. And of masters in foreign plantations to their negroes, or other slaves, IV. 212—215, 219, 220. Directions to masters for the right teaching of their servants, 270—281. They ought not to allow sinful vanities in their families, X. 431. Arguments and helps to them for patience under bad servants, XI. 441, 442. Masters of families urged to exhort their household to seek everlasting rest, XXIII. 145—155. Objections of, answered, 155—166.
Matrimony, form of celebrating, XV. 494—496.
May Games, sinfulness of, III. 622, 623.
Means of grace, wilful neglect of, a hinderance to conversion, VII. 251—262. Arguments and helps to patience under the loss of the means of grace and salvation, XI. 460—468. And when God seemeth not to bless the means to us, 468—476.
Mediatorship of Christ, how to be improved, II. 175—177. See *Jesus Christ*, II. 5.
Medicine, uncertainty of the science of, XV. 49, 50.

MEDITATION.
I. *Meditation generally*:—Brief directions for it, XIX. 524, 525. Special preparatory directions for, III. 199—203. Proper subjects for it, 188—190. 194. Aids for it, 197. Directions for choosing fit topics for meditation, 204—207. And for meditating profitably, 207—211. Meditation not a duty for melancholy persons, 227.
II. *Heavenly Meditation.*
1. *General description* of heavenly meditation, XXIII. 310, 311. In what respects it differs from all other kinds of meditation; (1.) It is the *acting* of the powers of the soul, 312, 313. Of *all* those powers, 313—315. The *set and solemn* acting, as opposed to that which is occasional and cursory, 315. (2.) It differs in its object, which is heavenly rest, 316, 317.
2. *The fittest time and place for it, and the preparation of the heart to it*:—Apportion a set and constant time for it, XXIII. 318—320. Let it be frequent, 320—323. And seasonable, 323. What is ordinarily the best season, *ib.* The Lord's day especially appropriate to this exercise, 324. The fittest times for extraordinary meditation, 326. When God extraordinarily revives and enables the soul, 326, 327. Also when cast into troubles of mind, 327, 328. And when we are summoned to die, 328—331. What is the fittest place for heavenly meditation, 332—334. What is the preparation of the heart to it, 335—338. The instrument to this work, ratiocination, XXIII. 339. The force of consideration for moving the affections, and powerfully impressing the heart, 340. It opens the door between the head and the heart, *ib.* Draws forth the weightiest objects, *ib.* Presents them in the most affecting way, 341. Meditation puts reason in its proper place and strength, 342, 343. And can discontinue this discursive employment, 343.
3. *What affections* must be excited in meditation, XXIII. 344, 345. How the judgment is to be exercised, 346. And the belief of the truth of the heavenly rest, 347—350. How the affection of love is to be excited, 350—355. Of desire, 355—358. Of hope, 358—361. Of courage or boldness, 361—363. And of joy, 363—367.

4. By what acts the soul is to proceed in the work of heavenly meditation, XXIII. 367. Of soliloquy, or speaking to ourselves, and how it is to be conducted, 368—372. Of prayer, or speaking unto God, 372, 373.

5. *Advantages and helps for raising and affecting the soul by this meditation*, XXIII. 374—377. Bring down thy conceptions to the reach of sense, 377—379. Compare the objects of sense with the objects of faith, 379, 380. The delights above with the objects of sense, 380, 381. With the delights found in natural knowledge, 381, 382. With the delights of morality and of the natural affections, 382, 383. The excellencies of heaven, with the glorious works of creation, 383, 384. The things to be enjoyed above, with the excellency of the admirable works of Providence in the church and in the world, 384—386. The mercies to be had above, with the particular providences enjoyed through life, 386, 387. The comforts to be had above, with those received here in ordinances, 387—391. The joy in heaven, with the foretastes which the saints of God have had in the way to it, 391—394. The glory of the heavenly kingdom, with the glory of the imperfect church on earth, 394—396. The mercies above, with the mercies which Christ has here bestowed upon the soul, 396—398. And the joys of heaven with the foretastes of it, which the Spirit has given here, 398.

6. *How to manage and watch over the heart through the whole work of meditation*, XXIII. 399. How to remove backwardness of heart, 400, 401. Beware, lest it delude thee by a loitering formality, 402, 403. Or by turning aside, 403. Or, lest it cut off the work before the time, 404, 405. Summary of the preceding directions, 405—407.

7. *An example of heavenly meditation*, for the help of the unskilful, XXIII. 407—450.

Meetings, religious and private, which are forbidden by rulers, whether lawful and necessary, V. 572—574.

Melancholy, causes of, III. 225; XVII. 243, 244. Its signs, III. 218—225; XVII. 244—254. Theological and moral directions for the cure of religious melancholy, 254—274. Medical counsels, 278—285. Directions to the converted against melancholy fears, XIX. 416—419. And to the friends of persons labouring under religious melancholy, III. 225—237; XVII. 274—276. Melancholy persons should be less frequent, and also shorter, in private prayer, IV. 311. Contracts made for melancholy persons, how far obligatory, VI. 293. The goodness of God vindicated for the help of such, especially in melancholy, as are tempted to deny it, VIII. 511—533. Directions to those who find that melancholy is the cause of their spiritual trouble, IX. 22—25. Arguments and helps to melancholy persons, against temptations to despair, XI. 450—460. Meditation not a duty for melancholy persons, III. 225.

Members, visible, of the church, what constitutes, V. 282. What is requisite to prove a man a member of the universal visible church, V. 282—285; XVI. 286—288. Who are to be accounted such, VI. 400, 401. Whether the trial, judgment, or consent of the laity, is necessary to the admittance of a church member, V. 402—404. Whether a person may be a member of a church who lives so far from it as to be incapable of personal communion therewith, 405, 406. The remedy for a member who is injuriously suspended or excommunicated, 406. Have all the members of a church right to the Lord's table, 408—414. In what cases church members may remove, 462. The becoming a member of the true church of Christ, one of the benefits of conversion, VII. 195. As personal faith is the condition before God, of title to the church privileges of the adult, so the profession of this faith is the necessary condition of his title to church-membership before the church, XIV. 414—425. What sort of profession is necessary to admission to church-membership, 425—429. Candidates for church-membership are to be tried by the pastors of the church, 429—443. Who are bound by the laws of Christ, what profession to accept, and what to refuse, 443—445. On the admission of adult members, who were baptised in infancy, their lives must be inquired after, which must be such as not to confute their profession, 469—471. The profession of the expectant not necessarily to be made in open congregation, in order to his confirmation and admittance, 471,

472. How his admission into the church is to be performed, 472—478. Desirableness of every church having a list of its members, 478. Those who were never ministerially or explicitly approved as church members, but have been permitted to join with the church in worship and ordinances, without such explicit approbation, are approved and confirmed members, 479. The mere baptism of infants does not confer upon adults a right to church-membership, 564—566. The case of apostates and infidels considered, 565—573. How far ignorance excludes a person, 576, 577. Positive wickedness is an exclusion, 579. Various particular prayers for them, XV. 499—504. Forms of confession, absolution, reception, and exclusion of church members, 504—516. In what respects the members of the church are divers, XVI. 289. They are not of the same age or standing in Christ, *ib.* Are not all of the same degree of strength, *ib.* Have not all the same degree of gifts, 290. Are not all of the same complexion, *ib.* Nor of the same degree of spiritual health, *ib.* Nor of the same usefulness to the church and cause of Christ, 291. Are not all the same in regard of office, 291, 292. Have not all the same employment, 292. Are not all equally to be honoured, 293. Why they will not all have an equal degree of glory, *ib.* The members of the universal church are all united together, as they have but one God, *ib.* Have all one Head 293, 294. Have only one Holy Ghost dwelling in them, *ib.* They have all one principal, ultimate End, 295. And one Gospel, *ib.* One kind of faith, *ib.* One new disposition, *ib.* One and the same object of their affections, *ib.* One rule or law by which to live, 296. Are devoted to God in one and the same covenant, *ib.* Have the same instrumental founders of their faith under Christ, 297. Every member is related to all the body, and has a particular love to each member of the same church, *ib.* And a special love to the whole, as well as to the more noble sort of members, *ib.* All have an inward inclination to hold communion with fellow-members, 298. And to all the instituted means of grace, *ib.* All have the same employment, 299. And an inward enmity to whatsoever is destructive to the church, *ib.* All will at last receive the same crown of glory, *ib.*

Memory, sinfulness of, in what it consists, II. 241, 242.

Menander, account of the heresy of, XX. 282.

Mental reservation, whether lawful, III. 533.

Merchants living among infidels or in a Popish country, cases respecting, VI. 332—336. Directions to them, 344—348. Merchants evading payment of customs are guilty of theft, XIX. 232.

Mercies of God, a continual motive to thankfulness, II. 425, 427—430. The duty of commemorating his mercies as much as our sins, wants, and troubles, in our prayers, 430. Meditation on them, a means of furnishing the mind with good thoughts, III. 194, 195. Recommended to melancholy persons, 231. Whether we may pray absolutely or conditionally for outward mercies, IV. 360. God to be acknowledged by faith in every mercy, XII. 185, 186. Knowledge of the mercifulness of God, and its effects, XIII. 148—151.

Mercy, works of, not unlawful on the Lord's day, XIII. 453.

Merit, to be renounced by those who are seeking saving grace, II. 57.

Metaphysics, uncertainty of the science of, XV. 48, 49.

Method, or right order, importance of, II. 97.

Michael the Archangel, who he probably was, XX. 361.

Midwives, Egyptian, case of considered, III. 530.

Milk and Honey, tasting of at baptism, whence it came, V. 367. Whether lawful to us, 369.

Mind:—Directions for furnishing it with good thoughts, III. 181—198. The change of the mind in conversion, described, VII. 24—32.

MINISTERS or PASTORS, office of, instituted by Jesus Christ, XIX. 253, 254.

I. *Qualifications of Ministers, and general observations on them.*—A judicious, faithful, serious, searching, and powerful minister, to be chosen and lived under, II. 113—118, 523—525; V. 118—120, 216. Direction for the choice of a pastor, VIII. 352—356. Ministers to be chosen cautiously, II. 141, 142. We are to learn of them, as Christ's appointed teachers of his church, 230. They are specially bound to redeem the time,

III. 170, 171. Ought well to consider the inconveniences and troubles of wedded life before they marry, IV. 20—22. Duties of people to their ministers, V. 111—115, 131—134. The ministerial commission explained, 116—118. What measure of belief is due to ministers, 120, 121. The personal faults of a minister to be distinguished from his ministerial faults, 196, 197. The work of the minister and congregation to be distinguished, 198—201. Whether the true calling of the minister by ordination, election, &c., be necessary to the essence of the church, 266—268. Essential qualifications of a minister, 267. Whether it be lawful to hear a wicked man, or take the sacrament from him, or take him for a minister, 269, 270. Whether the people are bound to accept an ungodly minister, and deny his more fit and holy competitor, if the magistrate or bishop enjoins such an one, 271—274. Whether the magistrate or the bishop have the first and chief power of imposing a minister on the people, 275. Ministers are not to use violence, but only to persuade men, 131, and *note*. Christians are to pray against the intrusion of carnal, ambitious, or covetous pastors, 189. Whether ministers are holy, and what reverence is due to them, 569, 570. Their consent necessary to the admission of church members, 286. Their relation to the church, 289. Whether pastors have a legislative power, 308, 309. Whether a pastor is bound, or may bind himself, to his flock for life, and may remove without their consent, 461. The duty of the people, where several persons pretend to be true pastors of a particular church, in consequence of differences between the magistrates, the ordainers, and the flocks, 462, 463. In what cases pastors may convene synods, 463, 464. Ministers are relatively holy, and what reverence is due to them as such, 570. Ministers may not sell God's word, or any other holy things, VI. 303, 304. Who are to be deemed true prophets and pastors of the church, 402. Continued necessity of a standing ministry, IX. 21. In all pressing cases their advice to be taken, and how, 265—277. Arguments and helps to patience for ministers, when their ministry is not successful, XI. 484—489. Aggravations of the sin of presumption in pastors, XV. 126—128. Their unskilfulness and unfaithfulness, a hinderance to self-acquaintance, XVI. 231—236. Wise and faithful pastors only to be chosen, 236—245. What joy, and whence, faithful ministers may expect in the fulfilment of their ministry, XVIII. 66—68. The wisest and holiest ministers liable to be accused even by teachers of Christianity, 163. In what cases ministers may practise medicine, XXIII. 113, *note* [b].

II. *Ministerial Call and Ordination.*—Requisites to, XIX. 257, 258. Whether the people's choice or consent is necessary to it, V. 289—291. The nature of such ordination, 292. To whom the power of it belongs, 293. Whether it is an act of jurisdiction, *ib.* Imposition of hands, how far necessary, 294. On the need of ordination, *ib.* Whether ordination is necessary to make a man a pastor of a particular church or not, 295. And whether he is to be made a general minister, and a particular church elder or pastor at once, and by one ordination, 295, 296. In what cases the outward act of ordination may be repeated, and why, 296, 297. Re-ordination, in what cases unlawful, and why, 298—300. What number of ordainers is necessary, 300—302. If one that has power ordain, and the rest protest against, whether he is to be received as a true minister, 302—304.

III. *Ministerial Office*, nature and reasons of, V. 107—110. Whether sincere faith and godliness be necessary to its being, 268, 269. Whether uninterrupted succession, either of right ordination or of conveyance by jurisdiction, be necessary to the being of the ministry, 276—280. In what it essentially consists, 287—289. Whether a minister officiating in another's church, acts as a pastor, and as their pastor, or as a private man, 305. The judgment of pastors and churches, when to be followed, 315. Whether a pastor may be at once, in a stated relation of a pastor, and a disciple to some other pastor, 315, 316. The proper duty of ministers in preaching, 399, 400. The people's remedy in case of the pastor's mal-administration, 405. May one be a pastor of a church, who lives so far from it as to be incapable of personal communion with them, 405, 406. The case of disunion between the pastor and church respecting psalmody, considered, 442. The duty of ministers

to whom penitents secretly confess a crime, VI. 417—419. Compassionate counsels to students, who are educating at universities and in schools, for the ministry, XV. 353—380. Necessity of the ministerial office, XIX. 256, 257; XX. 175—178. Ministers urged to exhort men to seek the rest which remaineth for the people of God, XXIII. 119—145. See *Baptism*, *Discipline*, *Excommunication*, *Lord's Supper*, *Prayer*, IV. and *Preaching*.

IV. *The Special Duties of Ministers.*

1. *To themselves*:—To take heed that they be not void of the saving grace of God, XIV. 53. Lest they live in those sins against which they preach, 54. That they be not unfit for their great employment, 55—58. And lest their example contradict their doctrine, 58—60. Why ministers are to take heed to themselves:—They have heaven to win or lose, and souls to be saved or lost, 60, 61. They have depraved, sinful natures as well as others, 61, 62. Because the work of the ministry requires a greater trial of their graces, 62, 63. Because the tempter will make his first onset upon them, 63, 64. Because they have many eyes upon them, 64, 65. Their sins have more heinous aggravations than other men's, 65, 66. The honour of their Lord and Master, and of his truth and ways, lies more upon them than on other men, 67, 68. The souls of their hearers and the success of their ministry depend on their taking heed to themselves, 68—74.

2. *To the flock committed to each of them*, XIV. 75—78.

(1.) The *ultimate end* of pastoral oversight, the glory of God, XIV. 79, 80.

(2.) The *subject matter* of their ministry, XIX. 254—257. To acquaint men with God, XIV. 80, 81. And with the right means of attaining the knowledge of God, 81, 82.

(3.) The *objects of their care*, all the flock, and every individual member thereof, XIV. 81, 82. Answer to the objection, that the congregation is too large for the minister, 84—87. More particularly the unconverted, 87—89; and the converted, 89, 90. Especially the young and weaker members, 90, 91. Those who labour under some particular distemper, 91. Declining and backsliding Christians, 92. Those who have fallen under some great temptation, 92, 93. The disconsolate, 93. Those who are strong, to prevent their temptations and declinings, 94.

(4.) The *action* itself of taking heed:—By the public preaching of the word, XIV. 94, 95. Administering the sacraments, 95. Public prayer, praise, and benediction, 95, 96. Special care and oversight of the members distinctly, 96. By knowing them, *ib.* Instructing the ignorant, *ib.* Advising them that seek advice, 96. Looking to particular families, 97—99. Resisting seduction, 99, 100. Encouraging the obedient, 100. Visiting the sick, 101—104. Comforting those who are in distress, 104. Privately admonishing offenders, 104, 105. More public discipline, 105. Public reproof, how to be administered, 105—108. Public exhortation upon discovery of repentance, 108. Publicly praying for the offender, 108—112. Assisting the penitent, confirming, absolving, &c. 113. Rejecting the impenitent from the church's communion, *ib.*, 114. Importance of discipline, 117, 118.

(5.) *In what manner* the ministerial work is to be performed:—Purely for God and not for self, XIV. 119. Laboriously and diligently, 120. Prudently and soberly, 121. Insisting most on the greatest and more necessary things, 121—123. With as much plainness as possible, 123. In a sense of our sufficiency and dependence upon Christ, 124. With humility and condescension to all, 125. With a prudent mixture of severity and mildness, both in preaching and discipline, 126. With affectionate seriousness, *ib.* Reverently and spiritually, 127. In tender love to their people, 128—130. With patience in bearing abuses and injuries, 130, 131. With a studious regard to union and communion among themselves, and to the union and peace of the church, 131, 132.

3. *Uses of this subject*:—

(1.) Humiliation, and the confession of past sins, XIV. 133—153. Confession of present sins, particularly pride, 154—164. Undervaluing the unity and peace of the catholic church, 164—180. Want of serious, industrious, unreserved laying out of themselves in the work of God, discovered by negligent studies, 181. By dull drowsy preaching, 182. By not helping those that want abroad, 183. By neglect of church duties, especially church discipline, 183. Pretences offered to justify such

neglect, 184—188. Answer to those excuses, 188—198. By the power of carnal interests, manifested by temporizing, 198. By ministers drowning themselves in worldly business, 199. And by barrenness in works of charity, 200.
(2.) Exhortation to take heed to all the flock, from the consideration of their office, and relation to them, XIV. 206—212. From the efficient cause, the Holy Ghost, 212. From the dignity of the object, 213. And from the price paid for the church, 214.
(3.) More particular exhortation :—To see that the work of saving grace be wrought upon our own souls, XIV. 215—219. To keep our graces in vigour and activity, and preach to our own hearts first, 223, 224. To stir up ourselves to the work, and do it with all our might, 225, 226. Keep up earnest desires and expectations of success, 226—228. Do well, as well as say well, 228. Maintain brotherly unity and communion, 230—242. Practise so much of discipline as is certainly our duty, 242—245. Faithfully discharge the great duty of personally catechising and instructing all the flock, 245—336. [See *Catechising*.] Answers to objections against this duty, xviii.—xx. The duty enforced on ministers, xx.—xxvi. Directions how to deal with self-conceited opinionists, 336—342. And to prevent or cure error or schism in our people, 243—352. Directions how to deal with those of whose condition we are between hope and fear, 353, 354.
4. *Duties of Ministers in the admission of Church Members.*—Pastors by office proved to be the triers and judges of those who make profession of faith, in order to admission as church members, by thirteen arguments, with answers to objections, XIV. 431—438. And by the practice of the church, 439—443. Though it belongs to the pastor's office to judge of the profession of such expectants, yet they are bound by the laws of Christ, what profession to accept and what to refuse; and if ministers wrong the church, the magistrate may correct them, and the people may admonish them, 443—445. The several powers of ministers, people, and magistrates, in judging according to their different works, 443—448. Besides approving of the profession and qualification of the expectant, there is to be a ministerial investiture or delivery of the benefit conferred, 449. To what description such ministerial investiture is by confirmation, and to whom by absolution, 450. [See *Confirmation*.] Ministerial imposition of hands in such admission is lawful, though it may be dispensed with in the case of scrupulous consciences, 452—469. Though, in receiving adults out of infidelity by baptism into the church, a sudden profession may suffice; yet, in receiving persons already baptized, ministers are to inquire after their lives, 469—471. The power of pastors in admitting a member whom one part of the congregation approve, and the other disallow, 476. Or if the people think a man unfit whom the pastor approves and would introduce, 476, 477. Duty of ministers, magistrates, and people, with speed and diligence to attempt the cure of the mischiefs arising from the neglect of a solemn transition from an infant into the adult church-state, 480—501. The benefits resulting from the duty of trying, confirming, (or absolving,) all that enter into the state of adult Christians, should provoke ministers, magistrates, and people, to join in the execution of it, 501—521. Directions to ministers for the most effectual practice of this work, 543—547. Of the exercise of pastoral discipline, with forms of prayer, &c. for the confession, absolution, reception, and exclusion of church members from communion, XV. 504—516.
5. *Exhortation to Ministers to urge men to seek everlasting rest*, XXIII. 119. The recovering and saving of souls their main work, 120, 121. Their work not confined to their studies and to the pulpit, 121—123. Do not deal negligently with any, 123—127. Polycarp's advice to presbyters, 127, *note* t. Their conversation should teach as well as their doctrines, 127—133. They should study and strive after unity and peace, 133—145. Ministers advised to study moderate writers, 141, *note*.
Miracle, definition of, XX. 84, 85. Distinction between a miracle and a wonder, XXII. 271. Whether any more miracles are to be expected, V. 558. Pretended miracles of the Egyptian sorcerers disproved, X. 179; XXII. 269. The miracles of Christ a proof that he came from God, XIX. 36, 37. Summary of the miracles performed by Christ and

his disciples, XXI. 213—219. The commonness of miracles in the apostolic age, XX. 9—11. Their sufficiency to prove the Gospel true, 11—15. The reason why miracles were then given, 20. But not to continue afterwards, 21. How they oblige us, 94, 95. Proofs that God did not enable false prophets to work miracles, XXII. 270. Nor allow man to work miracles in confirmation of a doctrine contrary to Scripture, *ib.* 271. The certainty and credibility of human testimony to the miracles related in Scripture, 273—281; XX. 89—93; XXI. 213—219, 242—261. The sufficiency of this testimony, XX. 95—97. Ten arguments in further proof of it, XX. 97—113. The testimonies of adversaries, and others, to the truth of the Scripture miracles, XXII. 281—289; XX. 335—370. The belief of miracles upon human testimony not a resolution of our faith into the testimony of man, XXII. 289—298. The arguments from miracles vindicated, 216—220. Objections of apostates to the argument from miracles, XX. 114—125. Observations on some miracles said to have been wrought in confirmation of error, 121—124. The evidence of miracles abundantly sufficient, 363—365. Observations on some miracles related to have been performed after the time of the apostles, XXI. 292, *note.*

Mirth, in what cases sinful, III. 277. Directions concerning it, 278—282. Considerations for repressing sinful mirth, 282, 283. The folly of carnal mirth, XVII. 173—176.

Misery of the unconverted, VII. 161—188. Of unbelievers, XII. 28, 29. Of the ungodly who lose the rest which remaineth for the people of God, XXII. 361—446.

Misinterpretations of Scripture, providences, and sermons, caution against, IX. 210—214.

Monarchy, objections of infidel politicians against, examined and refuted, VI. 72—86.

Mortal sins, how distinguished from infirmities, III. 336, 337. Ten temptations to take them for infirmities, and directions against them, II. 81—88. Whether frequent, known lying, is a certain sign of a graceless state, that is, of a mortal sin, III. 527. How to distinguish between *mortal* and *mortified* sin, *ib.* 528.

Mortgages, the lawfulness of taking, for security, considered, VI. 318.

Mortification of the desires and pleasures of the flesh, II. 143—145; VIII. 144—147.

Moses, law of, proof that it was from God, XIX. 30, 31. Whether it is abrogated, and not to be read in the church, V. 544, 545. Whether obligatory on other nations besides the Jews, 546—548. It was not to stand for ever, 555. Moses's wish, that he might be blotted out of the book of life, explained, XI. 323, 324. The circumstances of his appearing at Christ's transfiguration, considered, XVIII. 467—470. Of what things he and Elias conversed, 470—477. Design of their appearance, 477, 478. Some alleged difficulties in the book of Genesis explained, XX. 435—437.

Mother's Catechism, XVIII. 523—611.

Motions of the Holy Spirit, how to be discerned, IV. 294, 295.

Murder defined, XIX. 212. Why forbidden in the sixth commandment, *ib.* Causes of, VI. 129—136. The heinousness of this sin, 136, 137. The awful consequences of it, 137, 138. Special advices against self-murder, 138—142. And against soul-murder, 233—241. What reparation is to be made for it, 515. In what cases a murderer is bound to offer himself to death before he is apprehended, 515, 516. The magistrate only may do execution upon a murderer, 516. In what cases murder is unlawful, XIX. 213. The case of killing in self-defence, *ib.* Various human kinds of murder stated, 214—216.

Music, lawfulness of, in divine service, considered, V. 499—501.

Mystery of man's redemption, the knowledge of, a mean of furnishing the mind with good thoughts, III. 186, 187.

N.

Name of God, what is meant by, XIX. 128. How it is to be hallowed or sanctified, 128—134. What is meant by taking it in vain, 179, 180. How it is taken in vain, III. 501, 502; XIX. 180—184. The punishment denounced against this sin, 184, 185. Directions for avoiding it, III. 502—507.

Name of Jesus, lawfulness of bowing at, considered, V. 439.

Names of believers, how written in heaven, XVII. 159. Evidences for knowing whether our names are

written in heaven, 171, 172. How we are to rejoice on this account, 163—165, 177—180.

Names of week-days, and of months, with which idols were formerly honoured, whether they may still be used, V. 489, 490.

Nations, duties of, to their rulers, XIX. 211.

Natural man's life, briefly described, IX. 357—359.

Natural Religion, or godliness, proofs and principles of, XX. 457. Of man as related to the things below him, 460, 461. Of men as mutually related to each other, 461—465. Of men and other things as produced by their first cause, 465—471. The necessary existence of a first cause, 471, 472. What this first cause (or God) is, and the attributes thereof, 472—489. Relation of God to his creatures, especially to man, and as his Owner, II. 201; XX. 489—492. Of man's relation to God as his Owner, II. 203; XX. 493—495. Relation of God to man as his Governor, 495—522. Of man's relation to God, or our subjection to him as our Ruler, XXI. 1—6. Of God's particular laws as known in nature, 5—17. Of God's relation to man as his Chief Good, 17—38. And of man's duty to God in that relation, 38—52. Proofs that there is a life of retribution after this, 57—95. Statement of what natural light declareth of the mercy of God to sinners, and of the means and hopes of man's recovery, 122—130.

Nature, contemplation of the works of, a mean of promoting love to God, II. 375—378. How to know ourselves by nature explained, XIX. 13—15. On the natural knowledge of God and heaven, 15—17. The law of nature explained, 21—26. Human nature, explanation of, XX. 457—460. Of the intrinsic evil of sin, and of the perpetual punishment due to the sinner by the undoubted law of nature, XXI. 95—116.

Needful:—One thing is needful, and in what respects it is but one, X. 36—38. How the troubling matters of the world are many, 38, 39. How far this one thing is needful, 40—43. What other things are needful in their places, 43—45. Practical uses of this subject: *First*, by way of inquiry, how you have sought the one thing needful, 45—67. *Secondly*, To lament the distracted course of worldlings, 68—73. *Thirdly*, what course will you take for the time to come, 74. It is necessity that is pleaded with you, 76. God hath made but one thing necessary, 82. This one thing is that good part, 84. This good part is offered to you, and you have your choice, 87—90. If you choose it, it shall never be taken away from you, 91—95. What he must do in reason, that will be resolved which is the best part and way, and who shall be the judge, 138—155.

Needless things, directions how to judge concerning them, X. 427, 428.

Needy circumstances, directions how to overcome, by faith, unmindfulness to, XII. 478—490.

Negroes. See *Slaves*.

Neighbour, who is, VI. 430. How he is to be loved as one's self, 425; XII. 528—536. The true nature of self-love, and of the love of our neighbour, VI. 425—428. The extent of the love of our neighbour, 429—431. Directions for loving our neighbours as ourselves, 431—433. Reasons or motives of this love, 433—436. Our duty to our neighbour briefly stated, XIX. 500.

New Birth defined, XX. 398, 399.

New Testament, credibility of, XVIII. 436—443. Abstract of the history contained in, 596—611; XXI. 153—159.

Nicknames, sinfulness of, III. 574, and *note*.

Nichols (Henry), leader of the Familists, notice of, XX. 295.

Nicodemus, conversation of Christ with, illustrated, XX. 397—399. The success of his doctrine, 400. Aggravations of Nicodemus's fault, 400, 401.

Nicolaitans, account of the heresy of, XX. 283, 285, 286.

Nobility, compassionate address to the sons of, XV. 385—389.

Nod, Cain's flight into, explained, XX. 437.

Nonconformists, how they were treated from 1627 to 1686, X. ccccl xxv.—ccccl xxx. Expostulation with the English Papists for their seeking the ruin of the Nonconformists, 556—563.

Notitiæ Communes, or truths common to all men, whether more than the five articles enumerated by Lord Herbert, XXI. 572—575. Whether they are the only certainties in religion, 575—578. Or make up all the religion of the catholic church, 578. Whether they constitute all the religion of the catholic church, 578. Whether all revelation for religion

must be but a creed containing these common notices, 578, 579. Whether all supernatural revelations are to be tried by these common notions, 579, 580. Whether they do not infer the truth of Christianity, 581. Or are the necessary conditions of the certain knowledge of a divine revelation, 581.

Novelty of truth and godliness, caution against being struck with, II. 89—94.

"Now or Never," motives to the speedy and diligent performance of the duty allotted to us in this life, VII. 487. The work of this life cannot be done when it is ended, 488. Therefore it must be done with vigour and diligence, *ib.* Because time once past cannot be recalled, 489. Life can never here be restored, 491. This work cannot be done in the life to come, 493. What it is to do it with all our might, 494—497 Instances of work to be done with all our might, 437—508. Objections answered, 532—547. Directions and cautions for doing the work of God with all our might, 547—549. Exhortation to this duty, 577—582.

O.

Oath defined, III. 491. What constitutes a lawful oath, *ib.* How far the swearer's intent is necessary to the being of an oath, 492. It is not unlawful to lay hands on the book and kiss it in taking an oath, 494—496. Objections to this practice answered, 496—500. Whether any person who scruples swearing, being duly commissioned, may administer an oath to another person who has no such scruples, 501. Directions for the performance of oaths, V. 73—106. Oaths of obedience to churchmen, whether lawful, 541—543. The oath of supremacy may be lawfully taken, VI. 54, 55.

OBEDIENCE.

1. *Obedience to God*, necessity of, II. 207, 208. Its nature explained, 208, 209. Directions for bringing the same into full obedience, 209—220. Thankfulness, a powerful spring of obedience, 432. Constant and careful obedience a remedy against evil and idle thoughts, III. 175, 176. Criteria of sincere obedience, V. 48. Doctrinal directions how to live, by faith, a life of obedience to God, XII. 351—356. Practical directions, 357—363.
2. *Obedience to Parents*, to be inculcated in children, IV. 177.
3. *Obedience of People to their Ministers*, nature and reasons of, V. 110—115. Its kind and measures, 131, 132.
4. *Obedience to Superiors*, whether lawful when they prohibit something referring to God's service, V. 466, 467. Whether lawful in all those cases when it is unlawful to impose and command, 507—510. Is he obliged to suffer who is not obliged to obey, VI. 64, 65. Directions for obedience to magistrates, 65.

Objections to the Christian faith from things extrinsical, resolved and refuted, XXI. 358—395. Twenty-four objections drawn from the doctrines refuted, 307—358.

Objects, tempting, to be avoided, II. 289, 290; III. 455, 456.

Oblations, the lawfulness of making them at the Lord's Supper, considered, V. 448.

Obligation, import of, VI. 66.

Obscurities in Scripture considered, V. 535. In prophecy, explained and vindicated, XXI. 354.

Obstinacy, wilful, a hinderance of conversion, VII. 324. Address to obstinate sinners, 325—327.

Officers in the church, whether any new ones may be lawfully invented and made by man, V. 380—395.

Offices in courts of justice, whether purchasable, VI. 301, 302.

Offence, practical directions against taking, by the examples or lives of others, VI. 230—233.

Old People, obligation of, to redeem time, III. 169. Are not prohibited from marrying, IV. 12, 13. Special directions to the old, 396—403.

Old Testament, not out of date, but to be publicly read and preached upon, V. 544—546. Catechetical abstract of the history of, XVIII. 531—596. A concise summary of the history of, XXI. 148—152.

Omnipotence of God proved, XX. 478. The saving knowledge thereof and its effects, XIII. 56—63. Catechetical explanation of it, XIX. 65.

Omnipresence of God, a constant sense of, a preventive of evil thoughts, III. 176, 177. And of fornication, 449. Effects of a knowledge of the omnipresence of God, XIII. 31.

Omniscience of God, proved, XX. 478. On the saving knowledge thereof, and its effects, XIII. 63—71.

Opinion in religion, what, II. 95. Opinions respecting controverted difficulties in religion, not to be too peremptorily maintained, 127. The opinions of others concerning us, made temptations, 281, 282. And also our own opinions, 282. Direction against such temptations, 283. Cautions against taking change of opinions for a saving change, VIII. 155—158. Criteria by which true conversion may be known from mere change of opinions, 158—166. Directions to get beyond an opinionative change, 166—169.

Opportunity, or the present time of well doing, what it is, III. 120, 121, 143. How it is to be redeemed, 143 156. Opportunities of sinning to be avoided, II. 291.

Oppression, defined, VI. 348. Different sorts of oppression, 349, 350. Its great sinfulness, 350—353. Directions against it, 353—357. Cases of conscience about oppression, especially of tenants, 357—363. Arguments and helps to obedient patience under oppression from men of wealth and power, XI. 431—439.

Orders, the sale of, simony, VI. 303.

Ordination by Romish Clergy, whether null, V. 261, 262.

Ordination (Protestant). See *Ministers*, II.

Organs, lawfulness of using, in churches, considered, V. 499—501.

Original Sin, proofs of in infants, XIII. 91—96. The necessity of sanctification a further proof of it, 106, 107. Is pardoned in baptism, VII. 129.

Orthodoxy, the reputation of, how to be denied, XI. 289—291.

Ostentation, sinfulness of, VI. 370.

P.

Pack (Christopher, Lord Mayor of London), dedication of a sermon to him, XVII. 415—419.

Pain, arguments and helps to patience under, XI. 398—401.

Papists, errors of respecting the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, IV. 313. Observations on the seven sacraments of, V. 451, 452. Difference between them and the Protestants on the subject of tradition, 131. Whether Papists or Protestants are schismatics, 175. Papists, the greatest schismatics, and why, 188. Whether we must hold that Papists may be saved, 263—265. Whether they are bound to separate from the church of Rome, 265, 266. Their objection to the church of England, on the alleged ground of want of conveyance by jurisdiction, refuted, 275—279. Their antipathy to the Bible, VII. 60. Refutation of their assertion that the greatest rebellions have been caused by godly men, X. 194—198. Papists have uncertain ground for their faith, XV. 54—56. Are not agreed among themselves, what is the church which possesses authority, 56, 57. Their credulity in renouncing the evidence of their senses, 39—41, 131. And in believing all that the church affirms to be divine revelation, 80, 81. Refutation of the Popish error, that a man may more safely and confidently believe by the church's faith than by his own, 163, 164. The question considered, Whether a Papist, by his knowledge, may be a lover of God as God, 232—235. Self-ignorance causes persons to become Papists, XVI. 49—51. Refutation of their assumption, that the Romish church is the true catholic church, 309—317. Answer to their great question, Where was your church before Luther? 325—327. An humble expostulation with the English Papists, who by information and prosecution seek the ruin of Protestant Nonconformists, X. 556—563. The Papists' rule of faith proved to be sectarian and not catholic, XVI. 352—354. They have but little cause to glory in godly members of their church, 405, 406. Or ground for reproaching Protestants with the ungodly that live among them, 406, 407. Reply to their question, How do you know the Scriptures to be the word of God without the (Romish) church? XXII. 211—214. They are not agreed who is the judge for the final decision of controversies about the sense of Scripture, 214—216. Observations on the persecutions and plots of Papists, 308—310.

Paracelsus, account of the tenets and followers of, XX. 294, 295.

Paradise, the heavenly, reality of, XVIII. 166—168. Holy souls, how rapt up into it, 168, 169. The things belonging to it unutterable to mortal men, 169—171.

Pardon of sin, one of the benefits of conversion, VII. 195—197. The doctrine of, briefly explained, XIX. 102—108, 327—332. For what sins it may be had, 519. The day of

grace and pardon is *never* past in this life, 520. Whether, and how far, any man can pardon sins against God, 520, 521. God does not pardon sin before it be committed, 521, 522. Is an elect person pardoned before faith and repentance, 522. Whether pardon is perfect before death, *ib.* And as to all the sins that are past, *ib.* 523. Whether it may be reversed or lost, 523. How the pardon of my own sins is to be believed, *ib.* Faith or repentance not to be trusted in for pardon, 524. The several causes and conditions of pardon, *ib.* Directions for obtaining pardon from God, 524—526. Promises of pardon of all sin, XII. 266. And of renewed pardon of sin after conversion, 268. How to exercise faith about pardon of sin, 297—311.

Parents, duty of to their children, XIX. 203—205. Special obligations of to the holy education of their children, IV. 105—116. Directions to parents for this purpose, IV. 175—190. And for their right teaching of their children, 270—281. What they should teach them, XXIII. 167—170. Duties of children to their parents, 190—199; XIX. 205, 206. Contracts made by them for their children during their infancy, how far obligatory on the latter, VI. 290, 291. Arguments to them for patience under the loss of children, XI. 409—411. Or when they have bad children, 440, 441. Or when their endeavours in behalf of their children do not prosper, 489, 490. Compassionate counsels to parents, XV. 390, 391. What is the power of parents which children must obey, XIX. 197—200. How they should dispose of their property among their children, 207—209. Parents specially urged to exhort their children to seek the saint's rest, XXIII. 145—155. Objections commonly urged by them answered, 155—166.

Parts, natural and acquired, made temptations, II. 283.

Passions, not sinful in themselves, and why, XI. 256. When they are holy and good, *ib.* 257. In what the sinfulness of the passions consists, II. 242. Directions against all sinful passions in general, 257—261.

Pastimes, sinfulness of, III. 165. Vain pastimes must be denied, XI. 176, 177. See *Recreations*.

Pastoral church government, the true nature of, V. 395—397. Whether any part of it may be deputed to, or performed by, a layman, 397—399. The true sense of the distinction of pastoral power, '*in foro interiore et exteriore*,' 400, 401.

Pastors. See *Ministers*.

Patience, towards God, what it is and is not, XI. 385, 386. And towards men, 386—390. What it is to possess our souls in patience, 390, 391. Arguments for obedient patience in various instances, 397. Particularly in pain and sickness of body, 398—401. Under the sentence of death against inordinate fears, 402—405. Under poverty and want through losses or other causes, 405—409. Under the sufferings and death of children, 409—411. Of ungodly kindred, 411. Of dear friends who died in pain and misery, 411—413. Of pillars or useful servants of the church, 413—415. Under the unkindness and injury of friends and relations, 415—419. Under injuries from malicious enemies, 419—421. And in the case of persecution for duty to God, 421—431. Under oppression and injustice by men of wealth and power, 431—439. Arguments for patience in superiors under suffering by bad children, 440, 441. Bad servants, 441, 442. And tenants, 442. Under false accusations, defamation, and ruined reputation, 443—448. Under vexations and strong temptations of Satan, especially to melancholy persons, 448—450. Under settled doubts of sincerity and salvation, and temptation to despair, 456—460. Under the loss of teachers, and the suitable means of grace and salvation, 460—468. And when God seemeth not to bless the means to us, 468—476. Under weakness of grace, knowledge, faith, love, comfort, and great corruptions, 477—483. When God does not bless our callings, particularly the endeavours of ministers for their people, 484—489. Of parents for their children, 489, 490. And just endeavours for church and state, 491. Under the common sin and misery of the world, and the fewness of wise and godly men, 491—498. Under the sad distempers and divisions of Christians, 498—502. Under heavy judgments on the land by plague, poverty, fire, and wars, 502—507. Under the prosperity and triumphs of wicked enemies of the church, 507—509. And under the probability in any

visible means that the world should be much better, 510—516. Twelve general directions to get and use patience in every case, 510—520. Knowledge of the long-suffering patience of God, and its effects, XIII. 148—151. Importance of patience to every Christian minister, XIV. 131—133.

Paul (Saint), the wish of, that he might be accursed, explained, XI. 326. No real contradiction between his epistles to the Galatians and the Romans, XVI. 486, 487. In what sense he esteemed all days alike, 487, 488. His desire to finish with joy his course and ministry explained, XVIII. 61—85. His vindication of himself to the Corinthians explained, 162—184. The nature of his 'thorn in the flesh,' and the practical use of it, 175—179.

Peace, blessings of, V. 172, *note*. Directions for keeping peace with all men, VI. 263—273. The hinderances of Christian peace, XVI. 331—349.

Peace of Conscience, and *Spiritual Comfort*, right method for obtaining, in thirty-two directions, viz.—Get a clear discovery of the true cause of doubts and troubles, IX. 20, 21. Discover well how much trouble arises from melancholy, or from outward crosses, and apply the remedy accordingly, 22—27. Lay first in the understanding, sound and deep apprehensions of God's nature, 27—33. And of the gracious nature and office of the Mediator, 33—35. Believe and consider the full sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice and ransom for all, 35. Apprehend the freeness, fulness, and universality, of the conditional grant of pardon and salvation to all men, if they will repent and believe, 35. Get a right understanding of the difference between general and special grace, and between the possibility, probability, conditional certainty, and absolute certainty of salvation, and so between the several degrees of comfort which these may afford, 35—43. Understand rightly the true nature of saving faith, 43—46. Next, perform the condition by actual believing, 46, 47. Review your own believing, and thence gather assurance, 52—62. Make use on trial of none but infallible signs, 62—80. Know that assurance of justification, or right to salvation, cannot be gathered from the least degree of saving grace, 80—89. Know that assurance is not the lot of the ordinary sort of true Christians, but only of the strongest, most active, watchful, and obedient, 92—101. Know that even many of the stronger and more obedient, who have assurance of their conversion, are yet unassured of their salvation for want of assurance to persevere, 101, 102. Next to the comforts of general grace, learn to receive the comforts of the probability of special grace, before you expect, or are ripe for, the comforts of assurance, 102—107. Improve your own experiences, and those of others, to strengthen your probabilities, 107—111. Know, that God has not commanded you to believe that you do believe, nor that you are saved, or shall be justified, (but only conditionally,) and therefore your assurance is not a certainty, properly of divine faith, 113—120. Know, that those few who do attain to assurance have it not constantly, 121. Never expect so much assurance on earth as shall set you above all possibility of the loss of heaven, and above all apprehensions of danger, 122—129. Be glad of a settled peace, and look not too much after raptures, and if you have such, expect not a constancy of them, 130, 131. Spend more time and care about your duty than your comforts, 132—138. Think not that those doubts and troubles which are caused by wilful disobedience, will ever be well healed but by the healing of that disobedience, 139—172. Content not yourself with a cheap religiousness, 172—182. Study the great art of doing good, and let it be your daily contrivance how to lay out your talent to the greatest advantage, 182—189. Trouble not your soul with needless scruples, nor place religion in will-worship or overmuch rigour to your body, 189—204. When God hath discovered your sincerity to you, put it in your memory that it may be useful for the time to come, 205—210. Beware of perplexing misinterpretations of Scriptures, providences, and sermons, 210—214. And be willing that ministers should preach most searchingly for the good of others, without misapplying it to yourself, 214—218. Distinguish between causes of doubting, and causes of mere humiliation and amendment, 219—260. Carefully discern whether

your doubts are such as must be cured by the consideration of special grace, 260—265. In all pressing necessities take the advice of your pastors, 265—278. Understand that the height of a Christian life, and the greatest part of your duty, consist in a loving delight in God, and a thankful and cheerful obedience to his will, 278—287.

Peaceable Spirit, qualifications of, viz. —Union to Christ, XVI. 331. A public spirit, *ib.* Charity, 332. Meekness and patience, 332, 333. A high esteem of peace and zeal for it, 333, 334.

Penances, external, for sin, the lawfulness or necessity of considered, V. 452, 453.

Penitent, true characters of, XVII. 123—130. The duty of a minister towards a penitent confessing secretly a crime, VI. 417—419. A prayer for penitent sinners, VII. 455—459. Form of confession to be made by one before the congregation, XV. 511, 512. Form of absolution and reception of a penitent, 514, 515. And of thanksgiving or prayer for a restored penitent, 515, 516.

People, duty of to their ministers, and how they are to apply to them in health as well as in sickness, V. 111—115. Whether their choice or consent is necessary to the office of a minister in his first work, and what call of theirs is necessary, 289—292. What power they have in church censures and excommunication, 404, 405. Their remedy in case of the pastor's maladministration, 465. Whether they may bear a vocal part in worship, or may only say, 'Amen,' 433—438. The true nature of the liberty of the people, VI. 95. What power they have in judging of the admission of church members, XIV. 445—448. Address to the godly, and such as are fit for church communion, on the duty of reforming church abuses, 547—550. And to the ungodly sort, 550. Reasons why ministers should use the greatest plainness and seriousness possible in all their addresses to their people, XV. 535—538.

People of God, who they are, XXII. 28—29. Their characters, 171—199. See *Rest*.

Perfidiousness, directions against, V. 69—73.

Perjury defined, V. 69. Its heinousness and consequences, *ib.* 70—73. Odious in the sight of God, XIII. 147.

Persecution, defined, VI. 168. Different kinds of, 168—171. The greatness of the sin of, 171—176, 178. Denunciations against persecution, 176. Examples of persecutors, and their punishment, 177. Directions against persecution, 179—202. Persecution must not provoke to unwarrantable passions and practices, II. 123—126. Testimonies of antiquity against curing schism by persecution, V. 210—215. Arguments and helps to patience under persecution for our duty to God, XI. 421—431. The enmity of Satan against Christ evinced by open persecutions by Jews, Gentiles, heretics, and Papists, XX. 301—311. *Real* Christians no persecutors, XXI. 369, 370.

Perseverance defined, IV. 375. Directions and cautions concerning it, 373—375. Uncertainty of it, considered, IX. 101, 102.

Person of Christ. See *Jesus Christ*, I.

Philosophy, whether to be studied by Christians, V. 552, 553. What philosophy is condemned by St. Paul in 1 Cor. viii. 2, 3; XV. 5—16; 19—32. What is not condemned by him, 17—19. Uncertainty of philosophy, 47, 48.

Phocion, anecdote of, III. 73, *note*.

Physic, foolish reasonings of ignorant people concerning, exposed, IV. 144, 145. Compassionate counsels to young students in physic, XV. 380—382. In what cases it might be practised by ministers, XXIII. 113, *note* [b].

Physicians, directions to, for the discharge of their professional duties, VI. 109—114. Their duty, to persuade their patients to seek everlasting rest, XXIII. 117, 118.

Physics, uncertainty of the science of, XV. 47, 48. The physics in Gen. i. vindicated, XXI. 349, 350.

Piety, the highest motives to, contained in the Christian religion, XXI. 178.

Plaintiffs and *Defendants*, address to, XVII. 376.

Plantations, duties of masters in, to their negroes and other slaves, 212—215, 219, 220.

Play-books, pernicious and not to be read, II. 152, 153. The reading of them a sinful waster of time, III. 167.

Pleasing of God, our business, safety, and content, II. 573—575. Its benefits, 575, 576. The utter impossibility of pleasing men, illustrated, 559—572.

Pleasure, when sinful and when not, II. 217, 218. Directions against sinful pleasure, III. 277—283. The pleasures of holiness proved, from the nature of the thing itself, X. 296—334. From the helps and concomitants which attend it, 337—339. And from its effects, 339—341. The pleasures of holiness contrasted with sensual pleasures, 341—350.

Pledges, whether they may be taken as security for money lent, VI. 318.

Politicians, atheistical, objections of, refuted, VI. 71—92. Uncertainty of the science of politics, XV. 50.

Polycarp, advice of, to Presbyters, XXIII. 127, *note* [t].

Pomp, unnecessary, sinfulness of, III. 161—163. One way of prodigality, VI. 371.

Poor, directions to, IV. 379—385; VI. 278, 279. Temptations to which they are specially liable, and counsels respecting them, IV. 383—386. Their special duties, 386—389. In what case a poor man may, or may not, borrow, VI. 315, 316. Address to the poor in spirit, IX. viii.—xviii. How to become poor in spirit, XII. 433, 434. Arguments and helps to patience under poverty, caused by losses or other causes, 405—409. The Poor Man's Family Book, XIX. 299—655.

Pope, proved not to be the head or sovereign of the church, V. 280, 310, 311; XVI. 310, 311. Impossibility that he can or ever should be, XXI. 406. Papists themselves are not agreed whether the Pope, or the particular church of Rome, or General Councils, are the head of the catholic or universal church, XVI. 312—315. The Pope not the judge of controversies in the church, V. 313, 314; XVI. 354—356. Whether it is necessary to believe that he is Antichrist, V. 262, 263.

Popery: books against, recommended, IV. 269; VI. 345. Caution lest our aversation to popery turn to a factious partial forsaking of God's truth, XII. 573, 574. Why popery has so many followers, XVII. 38—41. Not favoured by tradition, XVIII. 443. The introduction of popery, a proof of the enmity of Satan, XX. 288, 289. And also the persecutions by the advocates of popery, 308—310. See *Papists*.

Portions for children, when to be accounted too great, VI. 372.

Possessions, satanic, nature of, considered, XVII. 246—248. Possessions and dispossessions, a proof of the existence of the devil, XXI. 88, 89; XXII. 324—327. And of his enmity against Christ, XX. 271. And of a future state, XXI. 90.

Power of God, view of, as displayed in Christianity, XII. 119—127.

Poverty. See *Poor*.

Practice, directions for, after hearing the word preached, IV. 259—263. Summary of the practice, enjoined by Christianity, XXI. 163, 164.

Praising God, the duty of, explained, II. 438, 439. The highest and noblest work in itself, 440. Its suitability to our condition, 441. Its excellency and benefits, 442—444. Directions for praising God aright, 445—448. It is of divine appointment in Christian families, IV. 67. Arguments in support of it, 67—83. The pleasure of praising God, X. 312—316. Be much in praise, as a help to a heavenly life, XXIII. 302—304.

PRAYER.

I. *Prayer in general.* Definition of prayer, XIX. 121. In what it consists, IV. 282. Its ends and uses, *ib.*; XIX. 121, 122. To whom it is to be addressed, IV. 283. What kind of means of grace prayer is, XI. 471. What prayer it is that is such a means, *ib.* What grant of prayers may or may not be expected from God, 472, 473. Proof that prayer is not in vain, nor God's promises broken, 473, 474. Why we should be patient even when God seemeth to deny our prayers, 475, 476. Directions for prayer, IV. 283—287. A brief explication of the method of the Lord's-prayer, 287—289. Whether it is a directory only, or a form of words to be used by us in prayer, 289, 290. Whether we must always pray according to the method of the Lord's-prayer, and it is a sin to do otherwise, 293, 294. Whether a wicked man may pray the Lord's-prayer, or be exhorted to use it, 296, 297. What need is there of any form if this be perfect, 290. Whether it is lawful to pray in a set form of words, 291. Whether those forms are lawful which are prescribed by others and not by God, *ib.* Whether it is lawful to pray extempore, without a pre-meditated form of words, 292. If both ways be lawful, which is better, 292, 293. Whether we must pray always when the Spirit moveth us, and only then, or as reason guideth us, 294, 295. No man may pray, who has no desire at all of the grace for which he prayeth, 295,

Whether a man may pray who doubts of his interest in God, *ib.*, 296. Whether an unregenerate man may pray, 296. It is both idolatrous and sinful to pray to saints or angels, 297. Set times, ordinarily, the fittest times for prayer, 298. Whether it is lawful to join in prayers with ungodly men, 298, 299. Or if the master of a family or a pastor be a heretic or ungodly, 299, 300. May we pray absolutely for outward mercies, or only conditionally, 300. Or, for all that we may lawfully desire, 301. How may we pray for the salvation of all the world, *ib.*, 302. Or for the conversion of all nations, 302. Or that a whole kingdom may be truly converted and saved, *ib.* Or for the destruction of the enemies of Christ and of the kingdom, *ib.* What judgment is to be formed of a particular faith in prayer, *ib.*, 303. Is every lawful prayer accepted, 303. With what faith must I pray for the souls or bodies of other men, *ib.* Or, for the continuance of the church and Gospel to any nation, 304. How to know when our prayers are heard by God, and when not, *ib.* How to have fulness and constant supply of matter in our prayers, *ib.*, 305, 306. May we look to speed the better for any thing in ourselves, or in our prayers, 306, 307. How must that person and prayer be qualified, that shall be accepted of God, 307. Whether forms of prayer in general be lawful, V. 414, 415. Earnest prayer to God, wrought in true conversion, VII. 55—59. The prayers of the wicked, how an abomination to the Lord, IX. 49. The pleasures of prayer, X. 310—312. Without self-acquaintance, we cannot pray aright, XVI. 90—93. Prayer, the most suitable conclusion of a Christian's life, XVIII. 53. Answers to prayer, a proof of the immortality of the soul, 282.

II. *Private Prayer*, a mean of grace, II. 49. Whether the same man must pray secretly, that hath prayed with his family or others, 298. Special directions for secret prayer, 311; XIX. 525, 526. Directions how to pray in faith, XII. 513—516.

III. *Family Prayer*, of Divine appointment, IV. 67. Twenty arguments in support of it, 67—83. Special directions for it, 309, 310; XIX. 502—505. Whether it is lawful to join in family prayers with ungodly men, IV. 298, 299. Prayers for families, morning and evening, VII. 453—455; XIX. 602—617; 643—645.

IV. *Public Prayer*. Whether forms of prayer in the church are lawful, V. 415. Whether public forms of man's devising are lawful, 26. 416. And may be imposed on the congregation, 416, 417. Needless cavils against forms of prayer exposed, XII. 507. Whether it is lawful to use forms composed by man, and imposed not only on the people, but also on the pastors of the churches, V. 417, 418. Whether a minister is so restricted to the excercise of his own ministerial gifts, that he may not officiate without them, or make use of other men's gifts instead of them, 418—420. Is it lawful to read a prayer in the church, 421, 422. Or to pray in the church without a premeditated form of words, 422. The conveniences of forms of prayer, and inconveniences of free prayer, 422—424. And the conveniences of free prayer, contrasted with the inconveniences of forms of prayer, 424—426. Rules for determining which mode is best, 427. Repetitions of the same words in church prayers, in which cases unlawful and lawful, 438, 439. Whether it is lawful to pray secretly on first coming into church, when the congregation is otherwise employed, 490, 491. Whether a minister may pray publicly in his own name singly, for himself or others, or only in the name of the church, as their mouth to God, 491—493.

Prayers, formularies of:—For families, VII. 453—455; XIX. 602—617, 643—645. For a penitent sinner, VII. 455—459. Prayer and praise for the Lord's-day, 459—464.; XIX. 626—635. A shorter form, 635—639. Short prayers for children and servants, VII. 464—466; XIX. 641—643. A morning prayer, VII. 466—469. The prayer of a dying believer, 564—568. Prayers before and after meat, XIX. 617, 618. Prayer for converting grace, to be used by the unconverted when convinced of their miserable state, 618—623. Confession and prayer for a penitent sinner, 623—626. Prayer for the sick, who are unprepared for death, 639—641. And of a penitent sinner, 646, 647. See *Lord's Prayer*.

Prayerless persons, excuses of for neglecting prayer, answered, XVI. 118—123.

Preacher, faithful, the work of, and

how it is to be done, XV. 228, 229. The greatest plainness and seriousness possible to be used by them, 535—538.

Preaching, order in which doctrines are to be introduced in, and how enforced, V. 120—130. Whether a layman may preach, 399. The proper duty of pastors in preaching, *ib.* 400. Whether a minister may forbear the preaching of some truths, when prohibited, or for the peace of the church, 428, 429. Whether a silenced minister may continue preaching the Gospel, when the law forbids him, 429—432. Whether all preaching must be upon a text of Scripture, 544. Ministers should preach to themselves their sermons before they deliver them to others, XIV. 223, 224. Public preaching will be better understood by catechising, 251. Love of the closest and most faithful preaching a mark of real sincerity, XXIII. 44.

Precepts of Scripture, how to know what parts of, are of universal obligation, V. 519—522. Excellence, brevity, and plainness of the precepts of Christianity, XV. 220, 221.

Predestination, mistakes respecting God's decree of, corrected, VII. 312—315.

Prefidence or *Presumption*, aggravations of the sin of, XV. 122—125. Particularly in students and pastors, 126—128. Its causes, 150—159. Objections thereto answered, 160—172. Directions for the cure of it, 173—184.

Prejudices early contracted, confidence in, a cause of falsely-pretended knowledge, XV. 156, 157.

Preservation of the Gospel, and of the church, generally, a proof of the truth of Scripture, XXII. 307—309.

Pride, defined, III. 2. Statement of some appearances like pride, which may cause men improperly to be censured as proud, 3—10. Pretexts under which pride may be concealed, XII. 434—442. Its ordinary effects and characters, 442—450. Its aggravations, 450, 451. Signs of the worst part of pride against God, III. 11—18. Of the next degrees of pride as against God, 18—23. Signs of pride in and about religious duties, 23—29. And in common converse, 29—45. Pride, productive of various sins, 45—47. The misery which the proud bring on themselves and others, 47—50. Directions for subduing pride, 50—68; XII. 451, 452. Signs of pride in apparel, III. 627, 632. Direction for eradicating pride in children, IV. 183, 184. The cause of schism, V. 191. A pestilent extinguisher of Christian love, VI. 451. A proud unteachable spirit, a hinderance of conversion, VII. 323. Exhortation to the proud, 323, 324. Pride, the reigning sin of the hypocrite, VIII. 428. One of the causes of falsely-pretended knowledge, XV. 151—153. Self-ignorance, a cause of pride, XVI. 44. Pride, an internal impediment to self-acquaintance, 265, 266. Its remedy, 266, 267.

Priest, whether the name may be used instead of minister, V. 493.

Prince, the character of a good and bad one, portrayed, VI. 21, 22. Holiness makes princes a double blessing, X. 188—191.

Principles of the doctrine of Christ, the leaving of, and going on to perfection, explained, II. 101, 102.

Prodigality defined, VI. 364. Various instances of it, and questions respecting it, stated and illustrated, 364—375. Aggravations of this sin, 375. Directions for suppressing prodigality, 376, 377.

Profession of our religion, reasons for making, V. 49, 50. What is to be professed, 50, 51. In what manner, and at what season, 51. Directions for making a sincere profession, 52—54. A full answer to the common reproach that professors of godliness are the most covetous of all, IX. 528—536. A public profession of faith before the church, necessary to admission to church-membership, and proved by precedents from Scripture, XIV. 414—425. Such profession must be a profession of true Christianity, 425. An assent of the understanding, and a consent of the will, 426. It must be credible, *ib.* And be, or seem to be, understanding, *ib.* Sincere, 427. Free and voluntary, *ib.* Not nullified by contradiction in word or deed, *ib.* And when a man has become incredible, he must give a practical as well as verbal profession, 427—429. Such profession is to be tried, judged, and approved of, by the pastors of the church to whose office alone this belongeth, 429—443. And they are bound by the laws of Christ, what profession to accept, 443—445. Of the different powers of judging in this matter, which ministers, people, and

magistrates have, 445—448. To this ministerial approbation of the profession and qualification of the expectant, there is to be adjoined a ministerial investiture, or delivery of the benefit expected, 449. The nature of such investiture, which is proved to be a corroborating ordinance, 450—452. Although, in receiving adult persons out of infidelity by baptism into the church, a sudden profession, without waiting to see their reformation, may serve, yet, in receiving persons previously baptized, their lives must be inquired after, which must be such as not to confute their profession, 469—471. Yet such profession is not necessarily to be made in open congregation, 471. But when a person is admitted among the adult members of a particular church, his profession must be either before the church or satisfactorily made known to it, to be approved of by a judgment of discretion, 472—478. Twenty objections against such approved profession censured, 521—542.

Professors of religion, the scandalous lives of, a hinderance to conversion, VII. 292.

Prognostication, moral, of what shall befall the churches on earth till their concord, by the restitution of their primitive purity, simplicity, and charity, XV. 403—428. And of the changes that will be in Christendom in the golden age and time of true reformation and unity, 429—447.

Promises made in consequence of force, how far binding, VI. 295—298. On the obligation of promises made by mistake, 304. The promises in the Scriptures belong to the converted, VII. 199, 200. Directions how to live by faith upon God's promises, and to understand them aright, XII. 233—266. Collection of promises of forgiveness of all sins, and justification to penitent believers, 266. Of salvation from hell, and possession of heaven, 267. Of reconciliation, adoption, and acceptance with God through Christ, *ib.*, 268. Of renewed pardon of sins after conversion, 268. Of the spirit of sanctification to believers, *ib.*, 269. Of God's giving his grace to all that truly desire and seek it, 269, 270. That God will accept weak, though sincere prayers, 270. Promises of all things, which are truly for our good, 270, 271. Of a blessing on the means of grace, 271, 272. To the humble, meek, and lowly, 272, 273. To the peaceable and peace-makers, 273. To the diligent and laborious Christian, *ib.* To the patient-waiting Christian, 274. To sincere obedience, 275. To them that love God, 276. To them that love the godly, and are merciful, 276, 277. To the poor and needy Christian, 277, 278. To the oppressed and wronged Christian, 278. To the persecuted, who suffer for righteousness' sake, 279, 280. To the faithful in dangers, 280, 281. To believers for help against temptations, 281. To them that overcome and persevere, 282. To believers in sickness and death, 282—284. To persevering believers, of resurrection to life and of glorification, 284, 285. To the godly for their children, 285, 286. To the church, of its increase, preservation, and perfection, 286, 287.

Property or *Propriety* in a thing, defined, VI. 273, 274.

Propagation of the Gospel, a proof of the truth of Scripture, XXII. 305—307.

Prophecies, alleged obscurity of, explained, XXI. 354. Obscure prophecies not to be taken for precepts, V. 145. Pretended prophecies, how to be tried, 560. Cautions against the inordinate studies of prophecy, XII. 523. Testimony of prophecy to Christ, XXI. 201—203. And of prophetical types, 203, 204.

Prosperity, long, not to be fondly expected, II. 164. How the delight of prosperity is to be denied, XI. 201—204. How to live by faith in prosperity, XII. 415—433. And to escape the pride of prosperity, 433—452. Prosperity, a hinderance to self-acquaintance, XVI. 253—259. Much prosperity not to be desired, 259—261. Proof from Scripture and experience that the prosperity of fools does destroy them, XVII. 97—106. How it destroys them, 106—109. Practical uses of this doctrine, 109—117.

Protestant, the term defined, XV. 77, 78. Difference between Protestants and Papists, on the subject of tradition, V. 131. Whether they are schismatics, 175. The Protestant rule of faith vindicated against the Papists, XVI. 350—354.

Providence of God, a fit subject for meditation, III. 192. Caution as to the drawing of conclusions from any mere works of Providence, V. 146. The

providences of God to be regarded with faith, XII. 183—185. Effects of a practical knowledge of the particular providences of God, XIII. 32—34. Self-ignorance causes men to repine at God's providence, XVI. 54. The apparent extraordinary providences of God, in behalf of the church generally, a proof of the truth of the Scriptures, XXII. 305—309. And also strange providences towards particular churches and believers, 310—312. And against the enemies of revelation, and the transgressors of the law of God, 311.

Psalms of David, the lawfulness of singing them considered, V. 496. In what manner they are to be used, 497. Psalm-tunes, of man's invention, may be lawfully used, 497, 498. Mistaken notions respecting the singing of psalms corrected, VII. 322. 323. The scope of the second psalm explained, XVII. 381—383. A psalm of praise to the Redeemer, especially for the Lord's-day, XIX. 647—652. A psalm of praise in the metre of psalm cxlviii. 652—655.

Public Assemblies. See *Assemblies.*

Punishment, the ends of, XXI. 101, 105, The everlasting punishment of the wicked proved, XX. 29—38. Use of this doctrine in temptations to infidelity, 38—42. In dulness and declining, 42—45. And in sadness, 45. The equity of the divine punishments proved, XXI. 103—110. What punishments God will inflict, 111—115. Refutation of objections against the eternal punishment of the wicked, 320—329.

Puritans, remarks on the abuse of, III. 574; VI. 237. How they were treated from 1627 to 1686, X. ccccIxxv.—ccccIxxx. Testimony of Bishop Downame to the use of the word 'puritan' in his time, XVII. 73. Of Dr. Robert Abbot, *ib.* Of Mr. Bolton, *ib.*, 74.

Purity of the Christian religion, XXI. 169—171.

Q.

QUAKERS, notion of, respecting the operation of the Spirit of God, IV. 226. Refutation of their appropriating to themselves the catholic church, XVI. 308. They have but little cause to reproach other bodies of Protestants with the ungodliness of their members, 406—408. Their conduct and principles in the time of Mr Baxter, XX. 299, 300.

Qualifications essential in a minister of the church, V. 267; XIV. 55—58.

Quenching the Spirit, caution against, II. 196, 197; XIX. 550, 551. How far done by our own reason, studies, &c., V. 567, 568. What is to be done to recover the Spirit after quenching it, 551, 552.

R.

Rahab, case of, considered, III. 531.

Ransom of Christ, sufficiency of, for all, IX. 35.

Ranters, tenets of, XX. 299.

Reading:—What classes of persons should be much in reading, IV. 267. Directions for the profitable reading of the Holy Scriptures, 263—266. And of other books, 266—270. Whether superiors, forbidding the reading of the Scriptures on the week-days, are to be obeyed by inferiors, V. 467, 468. By whom the public reading of the Scriptures is to be performed, 537, 538. Whether the Apocrypha, &c., may be read, besides the Scriptures, 538, 539. Directions for the reading of good books, IV. 264—268.

Reason, to be soberly exercised about matters relating to our salvation, II. 23—25. The arrogancy of reason against divine revelation, repressed, XX. 395. The proneness of unrenewed men to question God's word, when they understand it not, 401—403. Nature and working of this arrogancy of reason, 403. The weak intellect of man, *ib.*, 404. Wilful unbelief, because they cannot understand the causes of the things revealed, 405. And the ends and reasons of God, and the uses of those things, *ib.*, 406. Because they cannot reconcile the several truths of God, and place them in order, 406—408. Men will not believe unless they can see the possibility of accomplishing the matter revealed by natural means, 408, 409. When they hear any *partial* objections against the truth of God's revelations which they cannot answer, they question the *whole* truth, 409, 410. Causes of the arrogancy of reason, 411—419. Reasons to deter men from it, 422—429. Answers to the objection, Should we believe without reason? 429. And should we believe contradictions, 430—432.

Rebellion not favoured by Christianity, XXI. 366.

Receiving of Christ understandingly, explained, VIII. 95—131. How he must be received heartily, and with the will, 132—137. And entirely, 137—142; 268—270.

Reconciliation to God, one of the benefits of conversion, VII. 197. A criterion of walking with God, XIII. 157, 158.

Recreation, lawful, its nature, end, and use, III. 613; XI. 177, 178. Eighteen qualifications of lawful recreation, or eighteen sorts of sinful recreation, III. 613—616. Stage plays, gaming, cards, dice, and similar sports, not fit recreations, 616—619. Twelve questions proposed to the advocates of such recreations, 620—622. Seven considerations to the lovers of voluptuous and sinful sports, 622, 623. Directions for the right proportion and use of recreations, 623—626. What sports and recreations may be allowed to children, IV. 183. What expense may be incurred in them, VI. 369—371. Vain recreations must be denied, XI. 178—182. What recreations are lawful on the Lord's day, XIII. 457.

Red Sea, the miraculous passage of the Israelites through, vindicated, XX. 437, 438.

Redeemer, on the knowledge of God as our Redeemer, XIII. 91—105. See *Jesus Christ*.

Redeeming of time, what it is, III. 121, 122. Motives for redeeming time, 122, 123. Directions contemplative for this purpose, 124—143. Practical directions for redeeming time, 148—156. Who are specially bound to redeem time, 168—171. Address on the importance of redeeming time, XIII. 517—534.

Redemption by Christ, need of, to all mankind, XIII. 91—96. The great ends of, enumerated, VIII. 95—108; XIII. 96—103. The work of redemption explained, VIII. 113—117. Benefits thereof, both general and special, 118—127. On what terms they are conveyed, 128—131. And their certainty, 131. The common and special benefits of, to be distinguished, XII. 191. And also his works of redemption already wrought on earth, from his mediatorial work in heaven, 192, 193. Effects of the saving knowledge of our redemption, XIII. 103—105.

Reformation of a corrupted church, by whom to be made, V. 462, 463. Hostility of Satan to reformation, XX. 296, 297.

'*Reformed Pastor*,' preface to, XIV. iii.—xliii. The treatise itself, 45—334. (For an analysis of it, see *Ministers*, IV.) Appendix to it, answering objections, 355—394.

Regeneration, defined, XX. 388—390. In baptism, what, II. 17; V. 46; VII. 129. Not sufficient without being born of the Holy Spirit, II. 18. Evidences of regeneration, XXI. 277—287. Directions by which to know whether we are in a regenerate state or not, VI. 530—536. Difference between regeneration and conversion explained, VII. 20, 21. The witness of the Spirit in the work of regeneration, a proof of the truth of Christianity, XXI. 219—231. This shown to be the work of God alone, 231—235. And not the effects of fantasy, 235—237.

Regenerate, exhortation to, to know their sins and their graces, XVI. 168. For want of self-knowledge, they confess not sin as they ought, nor pray against it, 169, 170. Are negligent in watching against sin, 170. Seek not help against it, 171. Lie in unobserved sins, 172—198.

Rejoicing, the true method of, III. 279, 280. See *Joy*.

Relations of life, suited with temptations by the devil, II. 279. Directions against them, 280.

Religion, caution against receiving it, merely for its novelty or reputation, II. 89—95. And against being religious, without judgment, zeal, and holy practice, 95—97. Against young beginners meddling with controversies in religion, 99—101. Its pleasures represented, 134, 135. It ought to be purely divine, 164—168. Harmony between natural and revealed religion, 173, 174. A summary of the Christian religion, IV. 273—275. Directions respecting the profession of our religion to others, V. 49—54. The question solved, Whether a man may be saved in any religion, who is serious in practising it, VII. ccccIxxiii.—ccccIxxvi. No religion will save a man who is not true to it, and serious and diligent in practising it, ccccIxxvi., ccccIxxvii. The power of selfishness on men's opinions in religion, XI. 93—96. Address to those who complain of disagreements in matters of religion, XVI. 371—378. The sinfulness of passionate and reproach-

ful speeches against superiors, when we suffer for religion, 80—86. Examination of the religion of ancient and modern heathen nations, XXI. 139—142. Of the Mahometans, 143, 144.

Religion (Christian). See *Christianity*.

Remembering the word preached, directions for, IV. 254—257.

Remission of sins, how to be received, II. 497.

Renewal, or *Renovation*, of the soul by the Holy Spirit, vast importance of, XVIII. 285. Heaven is the sum and end of it, 286. It overcomes all fleshly and worldly opposition, 287. Can be wrought by none but God, *ib*. Was promised by Christ to all sound believers, *ib*. And is universally wrought in them, *ib*., 288, 289. It is the promised pledge and earnest of heavenly glory, 289. Effects of renovation, XXI. 280, 281.

Rents, cases of conscience respecting the raising of, VI. 359—361.

Re-ordination in what cases unlawful, and why, V. 298, 299. Whether it may be accepted, if church tyrants have such power, that, without their re-ordination, the ministry may not be exercised, 299, 300.

Reparation for injuries, how to be made, VI. 514.

Repentance, difference between it and conversion, explained, VII. 19, 20. True and false repentance briefly defined, II. 18. Repentance not to be deferred on account of its supposed easiness, 296. Whether it may be sincere when late, IV. 411, 412. Whether it may be too late in this life, VI. 334, 335. Character of the mock repentance of the hypocrite, and of the true repentance of the Christian, XII. 491, 492. Self-acquaintance necessary to true repentance, XVI. 78. What self-loathing constitutes repentance, XVII, 123, 128.

Reports concerning others, how far they may be propagated, III. 533, 534.

Repetitions in public prayer, not lawful in certain cases, V. 438. When they are lawful, 439.

Reproof, importance of, VI. 257. Directions for it, 258—261. In what cases it is, and is not, a duty to reprove a sinner, 261, 262. How infidels or heathens are to be reproved, 263. Reproof hated by the proud, III. 39. Impatience of reproof, a sure mark of self-ignorance, XVI. 63—65.

Reputation of riches, how to be denied, XI. 279, 280. Of gifts and spiritual abilities, 284—289. How far the reputation of being orthodox is to be denied, 289—291. And the reputation of godliness and honesty, 291—298. Arguments and helps to patience under ruined reputation, 443—448.

Reservation, mental, whether lawful, III. 533.

Resignation of ourselves, and of all we have, to God, duty and benefits of, II. 203—206. Helps to this duty, 206, 207. Resignation enforced, VIII. 147—155.

Resistance of sin, may be in the ungodly, II. 85, 86.

Resolution, nature of, VIII. 209—213. Why it is necessary to conversion, 213, 214. What kind of resolution is necessary, 215—219. Twenty motives to resolution, 219—239. Hinderances to resolution, 240—243. Directions for resolution, that it may hold, 243—246.

Resolution, holy, directions for, in hearing the word preached, IV. 257—259. New resolutions wrought in conversion, VII. 67—71.

Rest, outward, of the Sabbath, what, IV. 246.

REST (the Saint's Everlasting).

I. *Nature* of this rest:—Definition of it, XXII. 30—37. What it presupposes, 37—45. It contains a cessation from motion or action, 46, 47. A perfect freedom from all the evils of life, 47. The highest degree of personal perfection both of soul and body, 48. The fruition of God, 49—54. The sweet and constant action of all the powers of the body in this fruition of God, 54—56. And also of the soul, 56—60. Of the memory, 60—62. Of the affections of love, 62—66. And of joy, 66—68. Which is both a mutual joy and a mutual love, 68, 69.

II. The *Preparatives* to this rest:—The most glorious coming and appearing of the Son of God, XXII. 71—77. His powerful and wonderful raising of our bodies from the dust, and re-uniting them with the soul, 77—85. His solemn and public proceeding at the judgment of the saints, when they will be justified and acquitted before all the world, 85—94. The solemn coronatio,n enthronizing, and reception, of the saints into the kingdom, 94—97.

III. The *Excellence* of the saint's rest:—Rules for determining its excellence, XXII. 97—106. It is a purchased

possession, and how, 106—111. It is free, 111—117. It is the saint's proper and peculiar possession, 117—120. It is the fellowship of the blessed saints and angels of God, 120—124. The joys of it are immediately from God, 124—128. It will be a seasonable rest, 128—134. It will be suited to the natures of the saints, 134—136. To their desires, 136, 137. And to their necessities, 137, 138. It will be absolutely perfect and complete, 138—143. It is a rest from suffering, 143. A rest from all perplexing doubts and fears, *ib.*, 144. A rest from all that sense of God's displeasure which was our greatest torment, 144. From all the temptations of Satan, 145—147. From all the temptations of the world and the flesh, 147—149. From the persecutions of wicked men, 149—153. From all divisions and unchristianlike quarrels with one another, 153—160. From all the dolorous hours and sad thoughts which we now undergo, by participating with our brethren in their calamities, 160—163. It is a rest from all personal sufferings from the hand of God, 163—166. From all the trouble and pain of duty, 166, 167. And from all those sad affections which necessarily accompany our absence from God, 167, 168. It is an eternal rest, 168—171.

IV. *For whom this rest remains*:—They are a small part of lost mankind, and why, XXII. 173. Chosen to be especially redeemed and fully recovered, *ib.*, 174. They are part of the externally called, 175—177. They are, by the Spirit of Christ, thoroughly yet imperfectly regenerate, 177, 178. They are convinced of sin, 179. They are sensible of the evil of sin, 181. Of their own misery by reason of sin, *ib.*, 182. Of the vanity and insufficiency of the creature, 182—186. Of the absolute necessity, full sufficiency, and perfect excellency, of Jesus Christ, 186—188. They abhor that evil, 188. Bewail that misery, 189. And turn from that vanity, 189—192. They cleave to God the Father, and to Christ, 192—194. They enter into covenant with Christ, 194. Deliver themselves up to him, *ib.*, 195. And persevere therein to their lives' end, 195, 196. Practical application of these considerations, 196—198. Why they are called the people of God, 194. This rest proved to be for none but the people of God, 336—339. Why it remains and is not here enjoyed, 339. It is the will of God that it should be so, 340. God would subvert the established order of nature, if he were to give us our rest on earth, *ib.* If our rest were here, it would be injurious to God, 340—342. And to ourselves, 342. To whom it would be a loss for the present, as well as for the future, 343. And our natural incapacity would unfit us for enjoying it, 343—346. As also our moral incapacity, 347. That the separated souls of departed saints do enjoy this rest, proved by twenty brief arguments, 349—354.

V. *Proofs of the truth and certain futurity of our rest*, and that the Scripture promising that rest to us is the perfect and infallible word and law of God, XXII. 231—336. See *Scriptures*, I. II.

VI. *Practical uses of the doctrine of the Saint's Everlasting Rest.*

1. *The inconceivable misery of the ungodly in their loss of this rest*, XXII. 361—365.

[i.] *The greatness of their loss*, XXII. 365. They lose all that glorious personal perfection which the people of God enjoy in heaven, 365, 366. They lose God himself, 367, 368. They lose all those spiritual and delightful affections by which the blessed do feed on God, 368—370. They will also be deprived of the blessed society of angels and glorified spirits, 370, 371.

[ii.] *The aggravation of the loss of heaven to the ungodly*, XXII. 371. Their understandings will be cleared to know the worth of that which they have lost, 372—374. And also more enlarged, and rendered more capacious to conceive the worth of that glory which they have lost, 374—377. Their affections will be no longer stupified and dead, 377, 378. Their memories, during their torments, will be as large and strong as their understandings and affections, which will cause their violent passions to be still working, 378, 379. It will torment them to think of the greatness of the glory they have lost, 380. Of the possibility they once were in of obtaining it, *ib.* Of the great probability they once had of obtaining the crown, and preventing the misery, *ib.* And to remember their irreparably lost opportunity, 381, 382. And how often, but in vain, they were persuaded to return,

382—384. That God himself condescended to entreat them, 385, 386. On what easy terms they might have escaped misery, and on what easy conditions the crown was tendered to them, 387—389. To remember for what they sold their eternal welfare, 389, 390. That it was all their own doing, 391, 392. And that they were at so much cost and pain for their own damnation, 392—395.

[iii.] *They lose all things that are comfortable, as well as heaven,* XXII. 395. They will lose their present presumptuous conceit and belief of their interest in God, and of his favour towards them, and of their part in the merits and sufferings of Christ, 396—399. With the loss of heaven they will lose all their hopes, 399—408. They will lose all the false peace of conscience which makes their present life so easy, 408—411. They will lose all their mirth, 411—412. With all their sensual contentments and delights, 412—415.

[iv.] *The greatness of their torments discovered,* XXII. 415. From the principal author of them, viz. God, 416, 417. The place or state of torment is purposely ordained for glorifying the attribute of God's justice, *ib.* Their torments will be extreme, because they are the effect of divine revenge, 418. Justice and revenge will be the delight of the Almighty, *ib.*—420. Who will be the executioners of their torments, 420. The universality of those torments, *ib.*—422. Which will be unmitigated, 422, 423. And eternal, 424. Refutation of the objection of sensual unbelievers, who will never believe that God will thus torment his creatures, 425—429. Expostulation with obstinate sinners, who desperately resolve, that, if they must be damned, there is no remedy, 429—434. Address to the reader 435—437.

2. *A reprehension of the general neglect of this rest, and excitement to diligence in seeking it,* XXII. 437. Address to carnal worldly-minded men, who are so occupied with things below, that they have neither heart nor time to seek this rest, 438—441. To the profane ungodly multitude, who will not be persuaded to perform the common outward duties of religion, 441—446. To formal professors of religion, who will be brought to any outward duty, but will not be persuaded to the inward work and more difficult part, 447. Special address to the superficial opinionative hypocrite, 447—449. And to the worldly hypocrite, 449. Reproof to the godly for being too lazy seekers after this rest, 450—455. Exhortation to seriousness in seeking rest, from a consideration of the magnitude of the ends to which our affections and actions should be directed, 456, 457. Also of the greatness of the work which we have to do, 457, 458. The shortness and uncertainty of the time allotted for this work, 458. Our attentions and endeavours should bear some proportion to the talents we have received, and the means we have enjoyed, 459. The vigour of our affections and actions should be answerable to the mercies conferred upon us, 460. All the relations in which we stand towards God call for our utmost diligence, 460, 461. The sharp afflictions which attend those who either wander out of the way or loiter in it, 461. The great preparations attending us, 461, 462. Our affections and endeavours ought to be answerable to the acknowledged principles of our christian profession, 462. We can never do enough, 462, 463. It is the nature of every grace to urge the soul to diligence and speed, 463. Those who trifle in the way to heaven lose all their labour, while serious endeavours obtain their end, 463, 464. The consideration of the time already lost, a motive to exertion, 464. The greater our layings-out the greater our comings-in, 464, 465. Violence and laborious striving for salvation, the way directed by God as the best, 465, 466. Diligence in seeking this rest, the course approved by all men, 466, 467. The most serious Christians, when at the point of death, lament their want of diligence, 467, 468. Many go a great way, and yet eventually fail for want of taking more pains, 468, 469. God has resolved that heaven shall not be had on easier terms, 469. God, Christ, and the Holy Ghost, are serious with us, 470, 471. The ministers of Christ are serious, 471. Also creatures, *ib.* The servants of the world and of the devil are serious, 472. Application of these considerations, 472, 473. Ten questions addressed to sinners for their conviction, 473—477. Nine questions urging the godly to be in earnest for heaven, 477—482.

3. *A persuasion to all men to try their*

title to this rest, XXII. 483—485. The danger of their continuing in a state of uncertainty respecting their title, 485—488. Self-examination urged as a means of their coming to a certainty, 489, 490. The nature of the certainty or assurance of this rest, 491, 492. The several parts of the Holy Spirit, the Scriptures, holiness, conscience, and reason, in producing it, 493—496. The possibility of attaining an infallible certainty of salvation, 496—498. The hinderances which keep men from examination and assurance, 498—505. Causes of doubting among Christians, 505—517. Exhortation and motives to examine, 517. The commonness, as well as the easiness, of being deceived, about our title to heaven, 518—520. The danger of being mistaken, 520—522. How small is the labour of this duty compared with the sorrow which follows this neglect, 522, 523. The nearness of the time when God will search, 523, 524. The sweet effects of such examination, 524—528. Directions for examination, 529—534. Marks for trial, whether we have a title to this rest, 535. Every soul having such title places his chief happiness in it, 535—537. A hearty acceptance of Christ, to bring to this rest, 538—540. A more exact inquiry into the number and use of marks, and particularly into the nature of sincerity, XXIII. 1—41. Love of the children of God, as such, is a mark of sincerity, 41—43. So, when a man is the same in secret before God alone, as he is in public before men, 43. When a man loves the closest and most searching preaching of the word, 44. When a man has no known sin, with which he will not willingly part, 44. These marks all confirmed by Scripture, 45—47. Objections answered, 47—50. Cautions against misunderstanding in these points, 50—53.

4. *The reason of the saint's afflictions here*, XXIII. 53. Labour and trouble are the common way to rest, 55. Afflictions are useful to prevent us from mistaking our resting-place, 55—57. They are God's most effectual means to keep us from straggling out of the way of our rest, 57, 58. And to make us mend our pace in the way to rest, 58, 59. It is only the flesh which is troubled and grieved for the most part by affliction, 59—64. God seldom gives his people so sweet a foretaste of their future rest, as in their deep afflictions, 64, 65. Objections raised by the flesh stated and answered, 66—70.
5. *Exhortation to those who have got assurance of this rest*, or title to it, that they would do all they possibly can to help others to it also, 71—114. Advice, more particularly to ministers, to help others to this rest, 114—145. And to parents, 145—155. Objections of parents answered, 155—166. What they should teach their children, 167—170.
6. *Reproving our expectations of rest upon earth*, XXIII. 177. The sin and folly of seeking rest here, *ib.* It is gross idolatry to make any creatures or means our rest, 178, 179. And contradicts the end of God in giving them, 179. Consider whether it be not the most probable way to cause God either to deny those mercies which we desire, or to take from us those which we enjoy, or to embitter or curse them to us, 180, 181. It would be one of the greatest plagues if God were to suffer us to take up our rest here, 181. By seeking rest on earth, we seek it where it is not to be found, 182—185. To have creatures and means without God, who is their end, an aggravation of our misery, 185, 186. Experience shows that there is no sufficient rest for the soul upon earth, 186—191.
7. *Reproving our unwillingness to die*:—The sinfulness of this unwillingness, XXIII. 191, 192. There is much gross infidelity in it, 192. It betrays the coldness of our love, 194, 195. And that we are little weary of sinning, 195, 196. It shows our insensibility of the vanity of the creature, 197—199. Our dissembling, 199, 200. By unwillingness to die, we wrong the Lord and his promises, and disgrace his ways in the eyes of the world, 200, 201. Not to die were never to be happy, 201, 202. Reproof of our unwillingness to be glorified, 202—204. By unwillingness to die we join with our mortal foes, 204. Daily fears of death make our life a continual torment, 204, 205. The uselessness of all these fears, 205. Which nevertheless are beneficial to Satan, 206, 207. We have all had a competency of time and of the comforts of life, 207—211. The prolongation of life, without the comforts we have enjoyed, a blessing not worth the beg-

ging for, 211. Consider how many of the precious saints of God have gone before you, 212. Answers to objections, 213—217.

8. *The end of the whole a heavenly life:* For the nature, motives, and helps to which, and for the duty, means, and advantages of heavenly meditation, see *Heavenly Life*, and *Meditation*, II. A devout meditation on the rest which remaineth for the people of God, XXIII. 407—450. Concluding reflections, 451—459.

Restitution defined, VI. 511. How far necessary, 512. By whom to be made, 513. To whom to be made, 514. Cases of conscience concerning the manner in which it is to be made, 514—517. When a man is excused from making restitution, 517. Directions concerning it, 518. Duty of making it, with questions answered, XIX. 232, 233.

Resurrection of Christ, alleged contradictions in the narrative of refuted, XXI. 348—350. The resurrection of Christ a source of comfort against the fear of death, XVII. 588—590. Doctrine of the Apostles' creed concerning, explained, XIX. 78—81. And also concerning the resurrection of the body, 108—116. The alleged incredibility of the identical resurrection of the same bodies refuted, XXI. 330, 331.

Retaliation, the Mosaic law concerning explained, VI. 160, 161.

Retinue, costly, when to be accounted prodigality, VI. 371.

Revelations of God's will, whether any more are to be expected besides the Scriptures, V. 555, 556. Pretended revelations how to be tried, 560. Divine revelation a proof of the immortality of the soul, XVIII, 280, 281. The necessity of a divine revelation proved, XXI. 130—138. Summary of the evidences of divine revelation, XIX. 26—53.

Revenge, directions against, VI. 142—153.

Ribaldry, special directions against, III. 552—554.

Rich persons, directions and cautions to, IV. 389—393; 394—396. Their special temptations, 393, 394. Address to them, with directions how they may become more rich, IV. cccv.—cccxx. A catalogue of seasonable good works to be performed by them, cccxxi.—cccxxxiv. Texts of Scripture applicable to the rich, cccxxxvi.—cccxxxix.

Riches, the love of, how far lawful, III. 69, 70. When it is sinful, 70, 71; VI. 374. Its malignity, III. 71. Directions against cherishing an inordinate love of riches, 79—94. The reputation of riches how to be denied, XI. 279, 280. The riches of the saints described, X. 246—255.

Righteous, sentence of, at the day of judgment, XVII. 476—481.

Righteous overmuch, what it is to be, explained, IX. 189—192.

Robber, whether money may be promised to one, in order to save life, &c. VI. 295.

Romances, pernicious, and not to be read, II. 152, 153. The reading of them a sinful waste of time, III. 167. To be avoided, because they are incentives to lust, 457. The necessity of denying ourselves the reading of romances, XI. 176, 177.

Romanists. See *Papists*.

Rome, Church of. See *Church*, VI.

Rooted in Christ, what it is, VIII. 270.

Rous, (Sir Thomas and Lady Jane), dedication of the first part of the Saints' Rest to, XXII. 15, 16.

Rule of Faith, received by Protestants, proved in opposition to the Papists, XVI. 350—354.

Rulers, civil, memoranda to them, for the interest of Christ, of the church, and men's salvation, VI. 13—22. Duties of subjects to their rulers, 22—103. Observations on the admonition of rulers, 66—68. Holiness makes them a double blessing, X. 188—191. Duties of private men towards them, XVII. 313—316. What is the power of rulers, which subjects must obey, XIX. 197—200; 500, 501.

S.

Sabbath. See *Lord's Day*.

Sacrament, import of the term, V. 449. In what sense taken properly or improperly, 450. Observations on the seven sacraments of the Papists, 451, 452; XIV. 449. In the strictest sense they are only two in number, 449, 450. [See *Baptism* and *Lord's Supper*.] How sacraments confer grace, 460.

Sacrifice, the prevalence of, whether not an actual confession that the sinner deserved death, XXI. 589, 590. The Scripture account of sacrifice vindicated, 204—206. The sufficiency of the sacrifice of Christ for all, IX. 35.

Sacrilege, what is, and what is not, V. 571.
Safety, the way of, found only in holiness, X. 222—230.
Saint, defined, XIX. 96. Of the Romish church, 97. Prayers to saints are both idolatrous and sinful, IV. 297, 298. The happiness of the saints of God, II. 41, 42. Directions for the union and communion of saints on earth, V. 151—215. And about our communion with the souls of departed saints, 223—235. Their riches, X. 246—255. Their happiness, 132—134. How to be followers of them by faith, XII. 574—578. Why they are afflicted here, XXIII. 53—70. On the everlasting rest of the saints, see *Rest*.
Saints' Days, origin of the observance of, XVI. 505, 506.
Salvation, the matters of, to be deeply meditated upon, II. 23—25. And without distraction, 25—27. Direction for using the means of, 48—51. How we may pray for the salvation of all the world, IV. 301, 302. Whether we must hold that a papist may be saved, V. 263—265. How much of Scripture is necessary to salvation, to be believed and understood, 522, 523. How we may know what parts are necessary to salvation, 524—527. Who may and who cannot be saved, 548—551. Whether salvation may be had by one who does not believe all the Scriptures, but who believes that they have some mistake or error, 561. Directions for furthering the salvation of others, VI. 242—246. Salvation proved to be for the converted only—*First*, from the express words of Scripture, VII. 120—122. *Secondly*, by Scripture reasons, 122—129. Practical uses of this doctrine, 141—161. A conceit of the facility of salvation one cause why men make light of Christ and salvation, XVI. 517. The doctrine of the necessity of faith to salvation, vindicated from objections, XXI. 343, 344.
Sanctification, what constitutes the essence of, XVI. 202; XVII. 363. What is not essential to our sanctification, XVI. 202, 203. Difference between it and conversion explained, VII. 21. Evidences of sanctification, XXI. 277—287. Doctrinal directions how to live by faith in order to sanctification, XII. 351—356. Practical directions, 357—363. Necessity of sanctification a proof of original sin, XIII. 106, 107. Causes of our ignorance of the knowledge of our sanctification, XVI. 199—206. Motives to labour to know our sanctification, 207. It is the most excellent sort of knowledge, *ib*. And the most delightful knowledge, 208. It might sweeten every place and state, *ib*. It would much help our belief of Scripture, 209. And our trust on God in all straits, 210. And our cheerful progress in religion, *ib*. It may keep us from the terrors of the doubting, 211. Sweeten all other mercies, 212. And debilitate temptations to sensual pleasures, *ib*. And sweeten all the service of God, 213. And kindle love to God, 216. It is necessary to a life of thankfulness, 219. We shall not else live to the glory of the Gospel, 222. It will make all sufferings easy, 223. Particularly scorn, opposition, and slander, 224. Imprisonment and banishment, 226. Personal and family crosses, 227. And death, 227—231. The sanctification of men by the doctrine of the Gospel, a proof of its divine origin, XXI. 261—263.
Sanctified, import of the term, XII. 351, 352.
Satan, possessions by, nature of, considered, XVII. 246—248. See *Devil*.
Satisfaction, defined, VI. 511. How far necessary, 512. Who are bound to make it, 513. To whom to be made, 514. Cases of conscience respecting the mode in which it is to be made, 514—517. In what case a man is excused from making satisfaction, 517. Directions concerning it, 518. The necessity of Christ's satisfaction explained, XX. viii.—xv.
Saturninus, account of the heresy of, XX. 282, 283.
Saul's rejection considered and explained, III. 335.
Scandal defined, VI. 202, 203. What is not scandal, though so called, 203—205. Various ways of scandalizing, 205, 206. Different sorts of scandal, 206—208. Effects of scandals, 208. Use of the term 'scandal' in the New Testament, 209—211. Aggravations of this sin, 211. General directions for avoiding it, 212—223. Special directions against scandal taken, or an aptness to receive hurt by the words or deeds of others, 224—233. See *Backbiting*, *Slandering*.
Schism or division in churches, origin of the term, V. 156. Who are schismatics, 159—162. In what cases separation is not schism, 162—169. The mischiefs of divisions in

churches, 175—179. The malignity of the sin of schism, 180—184. Chief causes which prevent this sin from being hated as it ought to be, 185, 186. Directions for avoiding schism, 186—207. Testimonies of antiquity against the curing of schism by persecution, 208—215. The Romanists guilty of schism, V. 175, 176. Pretensions for schism examined and refuted, II. 120—122.

Schismatics defined, XX. 279. Different sorts of, *ib.*

Scholars, what needless studies are to be avoided by them, X. 433.

School of Christ, order of, XIII. 307—309.

Schoolmasters, end to be kept in view by them, VI. 114. The excellence and importance of their calling, 115. Directions to them respecting their duty for the souls of children, 115—118. Address to tutors and schoolmasters, XIV. 222. On their neglect of Christian instruction, XIX. 5. A catechetical manual for their teaching of youth, 10—292.

Scorners of Godliness, III. 557—565. Aggravations of their sin, 565—572. Directions against it, 572—577.

SCRIPTURES, or *THE WORD OF GOD*. In what sense they are the word of God, how far to be believed, and the excellence, necessity, and authority of them, XXII. 258—268. No new revelation to be expected but what is contained in the Scriptures, V. 555, 556. Their power and efficacy, II. 22. They are the only rule of faith, XVI. 350—354. The benefit derived to the church thereby, 248.

I. *Divine authority of the Scriptures.* Motives to study and to preach it, XXII. 246—258. The evidences for their divine authority briefly stated, XIX. 21—26. Special arguments for the truth and divine authority of the Scriptures, viz.,

1. *These writings and doctrines were confirmed by many and real miracles*, XXII. 269—277. The first eye-witnesses of them were not deceived, 278. They were men of extraordinary integrity, 279. Neither prophets, apostles, nor disciples, could carry on any designs of their own, *ib.*; and could have no intent to deceive the world, 280, 281. Testimonies of other witnesses, and of adversaries to the truth of the Scripture miracles, 281—289. The sufficiency of this testimony, XX. 95—117. Objections to it refuted, 117—121. The belief of miracles upon human testimony not a resolution of our faith into the testimony of man, XXII. 289—294. The necessity of such testimony, 294—298. The commonness of the miraculous works of the Spirit in the apostolic age, XX. 9—11. Their sufficiency to prove the Gospel true, 11—15.
2. *If the Scriptures be neither the invention of devils nor of men, they can be from none but God*, XXII. 299. Proofs that they are not the invention of devils, *ib.* Nor of any mere men; for good men could not devise them, 300. And wicked men neither did nor would, 301. And the doctrine and miracles prove that they were not the invention of men, 301. The illiteracy of the writers a proof that the doctrine was of God, 302—304. And the ignorance of philosophers, 304.
3. *The fulfilment of Scripture by apparent extraordinary providences of God:*—The propagating of the Gospel, and raising of the church generally, XXII. 305—307. The preservation and continuance of it, 307. The apparently impossible ways of accomplishing this, viz., not by might, nor by power, 307—309. And even in the midst of sufferings, 309. The strange providences exercised to particular churches, 310. And in behalf of believers, 311, 312. The strange judgments upon the enemies of the Scriptures, and upon the transgressors of the laws of God, 311. And the strange and evident dealings of God with the souls of believers and unbelievers, 312. Considerations proving that these confirm the authority of Scripture, particularly in the case of the martyrs, and in answers to prayer, 313—317.
4. *The Scriptures proved to be the word of God*, because they reveal that there is a state of happiness or misery hereafter, XXII. 318—329. Proof that it is necessary for man to know this happiness, and the way to attain it; and the misery, and the way to escape it, 329, 330. That mere nature and creatures contain no sufficient revelation of the endearments of obtaining the one, or escaping the other, 330—333. The testimony of the Spirit to the truth of the Scriptures explained and vindicated, 222—225. The difference between the godly and the ungodly, an evidence of their truth, II. 499, *note*.
5. *No other writing but the Scriptures*

can be the word of God, proved from the conceptions of Mahomet and others, XXII. 333, 334. And from the doctrines they reveal, 334, 335. Address to infidels who reject the Scriptures, on the causes and evils of their unbelief, XXII. 204—211. And exposure of the errors of the Papists, who affirm that we cannot know the Scriptures but by the church, 211—216.

II. *The Canon of Scripture* briefly proved, XXII. 335, 336. How it is to be ascertained, V. 537. Different degrees of certainty in the canonical authority of different books, XV. 64, 65. The certainty and credibility of Scripture not affected by its canon and integrity depending on human testimony, XV. 53, 54. On the credibility of human testimony, XIX. 53, 54. The certainty of the tradition of the Scriptures to us proved, XX. 15—20. Their integrity and genuineness, 117, 118. The late collecting of them into one book no just objection, 120. How we may know the true canon of Scripture from the Apocrypha, V. 537.

III. *Abstract of the history* contained in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, XXI. 148—152; and of the New Testament, 152—159.

IV. *Refutation of objections to the Scriptures*, drawn from the doctrines therein contained, XXI. 307—358; and from things extrinsical, 358—399. Though it could not be proved that every word of the Scriptures is true, nor the penmen infallible or indefectible in every particle, yet we might have a certainty of the Christian religion, 527—542. Yet all that is in the Scriptures expressed as God's word, is certainly true; and no error or contradiction is in it but what is in some copies by the failing of transcribers, printers, or translators, 542—550. Inability to answer all objections, or solve all seeming contradictions, no just ground of objection to the certainty of the truth, which a person has just proved by solid evidence, 550, 551. He who would arrive at certainty must begin at the bottom, and discern things in their nearest, intrinsical, and most certain evidences, and afterwards try the by-objections as he is able, and not pore first upon the objected difficulties, and judge of all the cause by them, 551—553.

V. *Reading and Interpretation of the Scriptures.* Directions for the order and manner of studying them, XII. 141—147. The reading of them recommended as a means of attaining a state of grace, II. 22; and of furnishing the mind with good thoughts, III. 187, 188. Directions for the profitable reading of the Scriptures, IV. 263—266. How far the Scriptures are a rule or law of worship and discipline, and how far not, V. 27—32. The difference to be noted in the Scriptures between Christ's universal laws and those which are personal, local, or alterable, 33, 34. How far a layman may expound them, 399. How far they are a law and perfect rule to us, 502—504. The mischief done by those who pretend that the Scriptures are a rule, where they are not, 517—519. How to know what parts of Scripture-precept or example are intended to be of universal obligation, and what are not, 519—522. How much of Scripture is necessary to be believed and understood, 522, 523. Is the Scripture fit for *all* Christians to read, being so obscure, 534—536. Who are publicly to read the Scriptures, 537, 538. Whether the Scriptures and the law of nature are contradictory to each other, and which is to be the standard, 554. Whether the Scripture is to be tried by the Spirit, or the Spirit by the Scripture, and which is to be preferred, 558, 559. Who they are that give too little to the Scriptures, and who too much; and the danger of both extremes, 561—565. Love of the Scriptures, the effect of conversion, VII. 59—63. The misunderstanding of Scripture a hinderance of conversion, 304—322. Importance of not mistaking the true use and end of the Scriptures, XII. 92—94. Observations on the difficulties and obscure passages of Scripture, XV. 59—63. Or the seeming differences therein, 64; XXII. 205—207. The truth of seemingly contradictory passages of Scripture proved, XX. 27—29. Self-acquaintance necessary to a right application of the word, XVI. 88—90.

VI. *Hearing the Scriptures.* How to hear the word of God so as to understand it, IV. 251—254; and to remember what we hear, 254—257. Directions for holy resolutions and affections in hearing, 257—259. And for reducing into practice what we hear, 259—263. Faith must hear

the voice of God in all his word, XII. 186, 187.
Scrupulosity not to confound us, II. 139.
Scurrilous talk, special directions against, III. 552—554.
Seasons, temptations suited to, and the remedy against them, II. 284.
Secrets, cases of conscience respecting, VI. 413—419. Directions concerning them, 419, 420.
Sects and sectaries, the existence of, not to discourage us in the way of godliness, II. 137—139. Directions to the converted against temptations, occasioned by the existence of sects, XIX. 424—432. The existence of sects among professing Christians no just objection against the truth of Christianity, XX. 114, 115; XXI. 371, 372.
Seekers, refutation of, and of others who deny the very being of the church, XVI. 300—303. What clear light they contradict, who say that we have lost the Scriptures and the church, XX. 68—71.
Self, what is meant by, XI. 59. See *Selfishness*.
Self-accusation, why the upright are so prone to, XVI. 123, 124.
Self-acquaintance, importance of, II. 283. Motives to it, XVI. 77, 78. Without self-acquaintance we cannot repent, 78. Nor be sensible of our misery, *ib.*, 79—80. Nor be Christians, 80—86. Nor know what to do with ourselves, 86—88. Nor how to apply the word of God, whether read or heard, 88—90. Nor how to confess or pray, 90—93. Nor how to give thanks, 93—96. Nor how to receive the Lord's supper, 96. All our studies will be irrational and preposterous, 97—101. We cannot well proceed to know extrinsic things, 103—105. Exhortation to serious study of ourselves, 106—108. Caution against avoiding extremes, 108—115. Motives to the ungodly to cultivate self-acquaintance, 124—139. *External* hinderances of self-acquaintance, and their remedies: —(1.) Ministers' unskilfulness and unfaithfulness, 231—236. Direction to meet this hinderance, live under a faithful and skilful pastor, 236—239. And make use of their personal helps, 239—245. (2.) Prosperity, and the flattery which usually attends it, 253—259. Direction: desire not much prosperity, and detest flattery, 259—261. (3.) Conversing only with bad men, 261—263. Direction: Converse with eminent, exemplary Christians, 263—265. *Internal* hinderances to self-acquaintance, and their remedies, 265. (1.) Pride, 265, 266. Direction: Come to Christ, 266, 267. (2.) Unreasonable tenderness of ourselves, 267—269. Direction: Look to the time to come, and be not too tender of present trouble, 269, 270. (3.) The blindness of self-love, 270. Direction: Bring your minds to a just impartiality, 271—273. (4.) Not observing the heart in a time of trial, but taking it only at the best, 273, 274. Caution, when and how to judge ourselves, 274—276. Direction to judge of your habitual state by your actions, 276—282. Directions for cultivating self-acquaintance, xii. Overvalue not the world, *ib.*, xiii. xiv. Keep all clear and sound within you, xiv. xv. Let the eye be always on the end, xv. xvi. Rather incline to think meanly than highly of yourself, xvi. xvii. Improve your self-acquaintance to a due apprehension of what is most suitable, profitable, and necessary for you, xvii. xviii. Value not yourself by mutable accidents, but by the essence and substance of Christianity, xviii. xix. Think not that a few hasty thoughts will bring and keep you in acquaintance with yourself, xix. xx. Let not your self-knowledge be merely speculative, but practical, xx. Manage your self-acquaintance prudently, and with the help of your pastor, xxi. Terminate not your knowledge ultimately on yourself, *ib.*
Self-conceit:—Signs of a proud self-conceited understanding, XV. 107—113. Mischief thence arising, 113—129.
Self-deceiver, religion of, being vain, all his hopes are vain, XVII. 44—47. It will deceive him in his extremity, 47—52.
Self-dedication or *devotion* to Christ, a remedy against evil thoughts, III. 180. A means of living by faith in God, XII. 175, 176. Characters of those who devote themselves to God and Christ, XVII. 355, 356.
Self-defence, in what cases lawful, VI. 164—167. The case of killing another in self-defence considered, XIX. 213.
SELF-DENIAL, nature of, XI. 60—76. Reasons of its necessity to salva-

tion, 76—81. The great averseness of men to any costly, troublesome, or self-denying duties, 96—102. Particularly in case of any suffering, 102, 103. How self-denial is to be tried, in order to ascertain whether it is sincere, 117—119. In what respects self must be denied, 120—124. More particularly,

I. *Selfish dispositions* must be denied; as, self-love, XI. 125—127. Self-conceitedness, 128—138. Self-will, 139—147. Selfish passions, 148—150. Self-imagination, 150, 151. And inordinate appetite, 152—158.

II. *Self-interest* must be denied, XI. 158, 159. Especially the pleasures of taste, 159—163. The gratification of lustful inclinations, 163—165. Wanton discourse, songs, &c., 165—168. Idle and worldly talk, 168—175. False stories, romances, and other tempting books, 176, 177. Vain sports and pastimes, 177—182. Vain company, 184—188. Pleasing accommodations, buildings, gardens, houses, &c., 184—188. Apparel, when used for carnal ends, 188—194. Ease or slothfulness, quickness and worldly peace, 195—201. The delight of thriving and prosperity, how to be denied, 201—204. Children and relations, how to be denied, 204—210. Also selfish passions, 211, 212. New, vain histories and other men's matters, &c., 212—214. Unnecessary knowledge and delight therein, 214—219. Factious desires of the success of our own opinions and parties, as such, &c., 219—222. What carnal liberty is to be denied, 223—229. Our native country and habitations, when to be denied, 229—231. Bodily health and ease from torments, 231—236. Natural life to be denied, 236—241. Twenty reasons for denying life, 241—264. On self-denial of the world. See *Crucifying of the world.*

III. *Of self-denial in point of honour and pride*:—Ambition, or the climbing into high dignities or places, must be denied, XI. 273—277. The love and good word of others, 278, 279. The reputation of riches, 279, 280. Comeliness and beauty, 280, 281. Strength and valour, 282. Wisdom and learning, 283. The reputation of gifts and spiritual abilities, 284—289. How far the reputation of being orthodox is to be denied, 289—291. And also, how far the reputation of godliness and honesty, 291—298. A renowned and perpetuated name to be denied, 298—308.

IV. *Cases and questions* respecting self-denial:—Whether self-denial consists in renouncing propriety (or property), XI. 309, 310. Whether it lie in renouncing marriage, 310—312. Or in solitude and renouncing secular affairs, 312. Or in renouncing public offices or honours, 313, 314. Whether it be a denial of our relations, 314, 315. Whether it requires that we should relieve strangers before kindred, 316, 317. How and with what degree of love self-denial requires us to love our neighbours, 318. Whether self-revenge and penance are self-denial, 318, 319. Is self-denial to be without passion, 320. How far we must deny our own reason, 320, 321. Must we be content with afflictions, with the permission of sin, or the church's sufferings, 321, 322. May God be finally loved as our felicity and portion, 323—325.

V. *Motives to self-denial*:—Selfishness is the grand idolatry of the world, XI. 325—328. The enemy of all moral good, 328—334. It is contrary to the state of holiness and happiness, 335—337. As self-seeking is self-destroying, self-denial is our only safety, 337—341. Selfishness is the powerful enemy of all ordinances, 341—346. The enemy of all society, relations, and common good, 347—354. It corrupts and debases all that it disposes of, 354—356. Self must be denied, or you will deny Christ, 356—358. It deals worse with God than with Satan, 358, 359. To be left to self is the heaviest plague on this side of hell, 359, 360.

VI. *Ten directions* to get self-denial, XI. 361—368. Concluding address, 368—373. Dialogue on self-denial, between the flesh and the Spirit, 373—380.

Self-destruction of man proved, VII. 436—441. The heinous aggravations of this sin, 441—448.

Self-examination, recommended, II. 539; VI. 529. Directions for self-examination before the Lord's supper, IV. 325—327. Self-examination urged as a means of coming to a certainty of our title to the saint's rest, XXII. 489, 490. Impediments to it, 498—505. Exhortation and motives to self-examination, 517—

524. The sweet effects of it, 524—528. Directions for it, 529—540. Fine remark of Seneca on this duty, 529, *note*.

Self-ignorance, shamefulness of, XVI. 36, 37. Evils of:—It cherishes Atheism, 37—40. Causes ignorance of the life to come, 40. And of the evil of sin, *ib.*, 41. Keeps the soul from true humiliation, 41. Makes Christ undervalued, *ib.* Makes a holy conversation vilified, 42. Makes men cheated by the world, 43. Causes pride, 44. Makes men run into temptations, 35. Makes temptations prevalent, 46. Makes men quarrel with God's word and ministers, *ib.* Destroys charity, 47. Causes church divisions, 48—51. Makes men troublers of the state, 51. Causes errors, 52. Makes men unjust, 53. And unthankful, *ib.* It is an enemy to true peace and joy, *ib.* Makes men repine at God's providence, 54. Lose their time, and neglect preparation for death, 55. Self-ignorance detected by men's unhumbleness, 59—61. By the abounding of hypocrisy, 61, 62. By the love of flatterers, and impatience of plain reproof, 63—65. By men's partiality to their own faults, 65—67. When every man would be a rule to others, 68. By the great change made by approaching death, or by other awakening providences, 69—72. By men's quarrelling with others in their sufferings, and overlooking the great cause in themselves, 73—77. Self-ignorance unfits us for being useful to others, 101—103. It causes the regenerate not to confess sin as they ought, 169. And not to pray against it, or for grace, as they ought, 170. Makes them negligent in their watch, *ib.* And seek not help, 171. They lie in unobserved sins, 172. The self-ignorant little think, while they are orthodox, into what errors they may fall, 176. Or in adversity, what sins prosperity may draw forth, 177. Or how soon the resolutions of affliction may decay, 178. Or, when the heart is warm and heavenly, how quickly it may cool and fall to earth, 181. And, in prosperity, they little think what sins adversity may detect or occasion, 188. Or what pride may appear in those who are humble, 189. Sin surprises the self-ignorant more dangerously, and the remedy is neglected through self-ignorance, 198, 199.

Self-interest prevailing with a corrupted will, a cause of falsely-pretended knowledge, XV. 157, 158.

Self-judging, motives to, VI. 526. Questions of conscience respecting it, 527. Directions for self-judging as to our actions, 528, 529. And as to our spiritual state, 530—536.

Self-knowledge, different degrees of, XVI. 34, 35. See *Self-acquaintance*.

Self-love, nature of, II. 460. How far it is lawful or sinful, 461, 462; XIX. 245. How far we may love God for ourselves, and whether more for ourselves than for himself, II. 471—493. Self-love a hinderance to conversion, VII. 288, 289. Directions against it, 289, 290. The blindness of self-love, a hinderance of self-acquaintance; XVI. 270. Its remedy, 271—273.

Self-murder, various causes of, VI. 138, 139. Advices and cautions against it, 139—142.

Self-resignation, nature of, described, XVII. 353, 354. The duty and benefits of, II. 203—206. Helps to this duty, 206, 207. Self-resignation enforced, VIII. 147—155.

Self-revenge, how far lawful, V. 453.

Self-sufficiency of God, proved, XX. 475.

Selfishness defined, XI. 58—60. Its nature and sinfulness, VI. 241—243; XIX. 246—248 Is contrary to friendly fidelity, XIII. 310. Directions against it, VI. 424, 425. A general complaint of the prevalence of selfishness, XI. 82—87. The prevalence of selfishness in all relations, 87—93. The power of selfishness upon men's opinions in religion, 93—96. And upon the partiality of their judgment in their own cases, 103—109. The great power and prevalency of selfishness discovered, 110—115. Consectaries of this doctrine, 115—117. On the denial of selfishness, see *Self-denial*.

Selling, cases of conscience respecting justice in, VI. 306—314.

Seneca, a fine remark of, on self-examination, XXII. 549, *note*.

Sense, not to be made a judge of matters which are above it, III. 351, 352. Contradictions of sense by the Romish church, 353. Especially in the doctrine of transubstantiation, XV. 37. Refutation of Bellarmine's assertion, that sense is no judge of substances, but only of accidents, 39—41.

Senses, ends of, III. 345. General directions for the due government of them, 346—358. Captivity to the senses, one cause why Christ and salvation are made light of, XVI. 514—516.

Sensuality, or voluptuousness, characteristics of, III. 112, 113. Evil of this sin, 105—110. Pleas brought in favour of it, stated and answered, 110—112. Counterfeits of the contrary, by which sensualists flatter themselves, 113, 114. False signs of sensuality, by which many are wrongfully accused of it, 115. Directions and cautions against sensuality, 115—119. The baseness of it to be inculcated on children, IV. 181, 182.

Separation of husband and wife, various cases respecting, considered, IV. 155—175. Sinfulness of separation from the universal church, II. 119, 120. What kind of separation is a duty, V. 162, 163. The separation of Protestants from the Romish church, a justifiable separation, 175, 176. And their duty, 265, 266.

Seriousness, constantly to be maintained, II. 544. Importance of, to ministers, XIV. 126, 127.

Sermons, whether a wife may go to hear them, when forbidden by her husband, IV. 153, 154.

Serpent's temptation of Eve explained, XX. 436, 437.

Servants of Christ, who are, I. 320; XVIII. 126, 127. Their duty, and directions for faithfully serving him, I. 324—332. Difference between the servants of Christ and those of the devil, 261, 262.

Servants:—Requisites to constitute a fit servant, IV. 40. Religious and moral qualifications of, 41, 42. Directions to servants in their choice of masters, 43—47. The special duties which they owe to their masters, 203—208; XIX. 210. And those which are due to them from their masters, IV. 209—211; XIX. 209. 499. Their duties to one another, IV. 220—223; XIX. 499, 500. Directions for their holy conference or conversation, IV. 224—229. Whether a servant may dwell with an employer who will command them to spend much of their time in trifles and vanities, to please a proud and curious fancy, X. 429—431. Directions for the right teaching of servants, IV. 270—281. Whether they are to forbear weekly lectures, at the command of their masters, V. 467, 468. A short prayer for servants, VII. 464—466.

Set forms of prayer. See *Form of Prayer*.

Shooting, as a recreation, question concerning, VI. 330.

Shrewsbury, inhabitants of, dedication of the Fourth Part of the Saint's Rest to, XXIII. 171.

SICK persons, arguments and helps to, for patience, XI. 398—401.

1. *General directions to sick persons*:—How they are to prepare for death, XII. 576—578; XIX. 568—572.

[i.] For the *unconverted*, in their sickness:—Their sad state, IV. 403—406. For examination, 406—408. For repentance, 408. For faith in Christ, *ib.*, 409. For a new heart, love to God, and resolution for obedience, 409, 410. Whether late repentance will be accepted, 411, 412.

[ii.] Directions to the *godly*, for a safe departure, IV. 412—414. Temptations to which they are exposed, and how to be resisted, 414—416.

[iii.] Directions how to profit by sickness, IV. 416—420. Sick persons are specially bound to redeem time, III. 169. And also those who are recovered from sickness, 171.

[iv.] Directions for a comfortable or peaceful death, IV. 420—433. And for resisting the temptations of Satan in the time of sickness, 433—438.

[v.] Directions for doing good to others in our sickness, 439—443.

2. *Directions to the family of the sick*, who are about them, IV. 443—446. Whether it is a duty to make known to the sick their danger of death, 446. Must we tell bad men of their sin and misery, when it may exasperate the disease by troubling them, *ib.*, 447. Or may cast them into despair, 447. What is to be done in so short a time, *ib.*, 448. And in doubtful cases, 448. Directions to them for speaking to the ignorant and ungodly when the time is so short, *ib.*, 449. The state of men's souls not to be judged of, by their behaviour in sickness, 449. Directions against indulging excessive sorrow for the death of friends, even of the worst, 449—452. Form of exhortation to the ungodly in their sickness, 452—464. And to the godly, 465—480. What makes us partakers in the sins of a church, V. 195.

3. *Prayers for sick persons*:—For one where there are hopes of recovery, XV. 500—502. For those who are unprepared for death, XIX. 639—

641. Of a dying believer, 564—568. For women drawing near the time of child-bearing, XV. 502. Thanksgiving for them afterwards, 503, 504. And for those restored from dangerous sickness, 502, 503.

Simon Magus, account of the heresy of, XX. 279—282.

Sin defined, and the evil of it, II. 244—248. The state of sin described, 19. Confession of sin a mean of grace and salvation, 49, 50. The sin against the Holy Ghost explained, 189, 190. Necessity of resisting the first beginnings of, 219. How sin first entered the innocent soul, 240. The common aggravations of sin, 248, 249. The special aggravations of the sins of the children of God, 249—251. Directions for thinking of sin as it is, 251—254. And for obtaining a cure of it, 254—258. Opportunities of sinning to be avoided, 291. Sin, no small or trifling matter, 297. Not to be committed though resolved to be committed no more, 298. God needs no sinful means to attain his ends, 300. A certain great duty not to be omitted, because there may be a danger of committing a small sin in doing it, 346—348. Various sins which are produced by pride, III. 45—47. Is it lawful for a man to suffer or contribute to the known sin of his wife, child, servants, or other relations, IV. 167—173. Whether a man may afflict himself by external penances for sin, V. 452, 453. Forsaking of sin, a consequence of true conversion, VII. 104—109. Sin the cause of most of the doubts felt by Christians, IX. 156—159. Ignorance of the evil of sin, caused by self-ignorance, XVI. 40, 41. Sin, when most unobserved, 173. Mortal sins, how to be distinguished from infirmities, III. 336, 337. Ten temptations to take them for infirmities, and declarations against them, II. 81—88. For what sins a man may be denied communion, 444, 445. Who are guilty of being partakers of other men's sins, VI. 241, 242. What reparation is to be made by those who have tempted others to sin, 514. Nature of sins of infirmity opened, IX. 144—148. What sins troubled Christians should most search after, 159—172. How to have faith against particular sins, XII. 405—415. Aggravations of ministers' sins, XIV. 65, 66. Some of the greatest sins of Christians too little observed and lamented, XVI. 191. Particularly the remains of infidelity, *ib.* The great imperfection of love to God, *ib.* And want of love to one another, 192. What sins may consist with true grace, 203—205. The doctrine of the Apostles' creed concerning the forgiveness of sins, explained, XIX. 102—108. Of the intrinsic evil of sin, and of the perpetual punishment due to the sinner by the law of nature, XXI. 95—116. See *Confession*, *Pardon*.

Sin against the Holy Ghost, judgment of the fathers of the Christian church concerning, XX. 217—220. Of the Papists, 220. And of the reformed writers, 221, 222. The judgment of ancient and of later writers, whether this sin be absolutely unpardonable, 223—225. And why it is more unpardonable, 225, 226. Mr. Baxter's judgment what is *not* the sin against the Holy Ghost, 226—235. And what *is* this sin, XIX. 90; XX. 55—57, 235—243. Whether the malicious opposing of the internal illumination of the Spirit be this sin, 243—246. Whether all total apostacy be this sin, 246—251. Result of the preceding discussion, 251, 252. The sin against the Holy Ghost so unreasonable and impious, that it is no wonder if it be unpardonable, 370—375. Mr. Lyford's objections to the Treatise of the Sin against the Holy Ghost examined and refuted, 380—394.

Sincerity, five certain marks of, in real Christians, IX. 63—65. Twenty explicatory points for understanding these signs, 65—80. When God has discovered to a believer his sincerity, he should fix it in his memory, 205—209. Why the sincere can discourse so fully about heart affairs, XVI. 116. And are so full in prayers, while others are so empty, 117. In what cases they may go on in sin against knowledge, 142, 143. Directions to the converted against doubting their sincerity, XIX. 419. The superior sincerity of the Christian religion, XXI. 175. A fuller inquiry into the nature and marks of sincerity, XXIII. 1—47.

Singing of psalms, the lawfulness of, considered, XXI. 496. How to be conducted, 497. Mistakes concerning, corrected, VII. 322, 323.

Sinners, unconverted and graceless, directions to, for the attaining of true saving grace, II. 5—88. Custom in sinning, a hinderance of their

conversion, VII. 286, 287. Direction against it, 287, 288. Conference for the conviction of an unconverted sinner, XIX. 298—332. The conversion of a sinner, and what it is, 332—414. A statement of what natural light declares of the mercy of God to sinners, and of the means and hopes of man's recovery, XXI. 122—136. See *Conversion*.

Slandering, or defamation, cases of conscience respecting, VI. 386—390. Directions against it, 391—394; XII. 526. The evil of slandering, VI. 394—397. What reparation to be made for it, 514. Arguments and helps to patience under defamation, XI. 443—448.

Slaves:—Whether it is lawful for a Christian to buy and use a man as a slave, IV. 216; XIX. 210. Or to use a Christian as a slave, IV. 216, 217. What difference is to be made between a free person and a slave, 217, 218. The sinfulness of buying slaves who have been stolen by others, 218. They are not to be sold again, to make our money, *ib.* Or to be returned to the person of whom they were bought, 219. The duties of masters to their slaves, 212—215, 219, 220.

Sleep, why given to us, and when necessary, III. 462. When it is excessive, 463, 464. Its sinfulness, as a waster of time, 159—464. It is guilty of the omission of duties which ought to be performed, 465. The love of sleep, whether the mortal sin reigning in any one, *ib.*, 466. Directions for overcoming excessive sleep, 467—469. The physical sleep of the soul disproved, XVIII. 264—277. Its moral sleep, 17.

Sloth, defined, III. 587. Its aggravations, 588, 589. Its sinfulness, 591—595; XI. 195—199. Particularly, as a waster of time, III. 156—158. Directions and cautions against it, 595—601. Slothfulness, a cause of falsely-pretended knowledge, XV. 157.

Society of experienced Christians, a mean of grace, II. 50, 51. The benefits conferred by holiness upon all societies, X. 184—202. How by faith to order our affections to public societies, XII. 521, 522.

Soldiers should live in continual readiness to die, VI. 119, 120. Should be sure that they have a warrantable cause and call, 120—122. Directions to them respecting their duty, 123—128.

'*Solemn*,' import of the word, IV. 49.

Solicitors of causes, duty of, XVII. 374—376.

Soliloquy, or speaking to ourselves in meditation, nature and importance of, XXIII. 368—372.

Solitariness, unnecessary, to be avoided by melancholy persons, III. 228, 229; XIII. 361.

Solitude, in what cases lawful and good, XIII. 327. Reasons against unnecessary solitude, *ib.*, 328—334. The comfort and the benefits of converse with God in necessary solitude, 335—353. Directions for conversing with God in solitude, 353—358. Devout meditation thereon, 358—361.

Sorrow, in itself, is neither good nor evil, III. 319. Sorrow for misery and sin, when a moral good, *ib.*, 320. When it is too great, 321. Directions against sinful sorrow, 321—329. Believers not to be overwhelmed by perplexing sorrows, II. 141, 142. The mischiefs of excessive sorrow, III. 327, 328. Directions against excessive sorrow on the death of friends, IV. 449—452. How a penitent sinner shall know when to restrain his sorrows, VIII. 81—83. When his sorrow is too short, he should labour to increase it, 83—88. In what case sorrow is overmuch, XVII. 237—239. How it swallows up a man, 239—242. Its causes, 243—254. Its cure, 254—276. What kind of sorrow precedes the joy of Christ's disciples, XVIII. 201—209. Christ's death and departure, the cause of their sorrow, 209, 210. Their sorrows short, and why, 210—218. Will be turned by Christ into a joy, which no man can take from them, 225—230.

Soul, the nature of, XVIII. 13, 14. Address to those who question the existence of their souls, and are in danger of losing them, 14—16. Proofs that it does not die, 16—18. [See *Immortality*.] Who are guilty of soul-murder, and in what ways, VI. 234—241; XIX. 215, 216. The salvation of the soul, how to be helped by near relations, IV. 127—141. Proofs that the separate souls of departed saints enjoy rest, XXII. 349—354.

Sovereignty of God, on the saving knowledge of, and its effects, XIII. 120—128.

Speech, edifying, necessity of, VI. 253. Directions for it, 254—257.

Spending, extravagant. See *Prodigality*.

Spirit;—Import of the term, XVIII. 13. On the saving knowledge of God as a Spirit, and its effects, XIII. 50—53. How Christ receives the spirits of his saints when they leave the flesh, XVIII. 18—21. A dying Christian encouraged to commit his departing spirit to Christ, 21—25. What spirits or souls Christ will receive, 25, 26. Considerations to stir up to preparation for being received by him, 27—33. And animating believers to commend their departing spirits to Christ, 33—44. Prayer that Christ would receive our departing spirits, the most suitable conclusion of a Christian's life, 53—55.

Spirit (*Holy*). See *HOLY SPIRIT.*

Spirit of adoption, what it is, IX. 53—55.

Spiritual Comfort. See *Peace of Conscience.*

Spirituality of the Christian religion, XXI. 168, 169.

Sponsors in baptism, true meaning of, V. 338, 339. Whether it is lawful to make use of them, 339, 340.

Sports, inordinate, a sinful waste of time, III. 165. Vain sports must be denied, XI. 177—182. See *Recreations.*

Spots, question respecting the wearing of, III. 629—632.

Stage-plays, what judgment ought to be formed of them, III. 616—618. Wanton stage-plays to be avoided, 458. Unlawfulness of them represented, and exhortation not to attend them, V. 483—485.

Standing up at the reading of the Gospel, whether lawful, V. 440.

State, tranquillity of the, disturbed through self-ignorance, XVI. 51.

Stealing, defined, XIX. 226. See *Theft.*

Stephen, death of, XVIII. 10, 11. His last words explained and improved, 12—57.

Stories, false, the reading of, to be denied and why, XI. 176, 177.

Striving against the Spirit of grace, a hinderance of conversion, VII. 297. Direction to yield to the Spirit of grace, 298.

Stubbs (Rev. Henry), sermon at his funeral, XVIII. 61—85. His character as a minister, 71—74. Address to his hearers, 77—85.

Students, directions to, for the regulation of their thoughts, during their studies, II. 238—249, 254—256. Twenty instances of extremes, to be avoided by them, 249—254. Directions to them, as to the order of their studies, V. 575—584. And the choice of books, 574—576. List of books recommended, 587—600. Remarks thereon, 601, 602. What needless studies are to be avoided, X. 431. Aggravations of the sin of presumption, or pretended knowledge, in students, XV. 126—128. Compassionate counsels to students, educating for the ministry, at the universities and schools, 353—380. To students in physic, 380—382. To students in the law, 383—385. Without self-acquaintance all studies will be irrational and preposterous, XVI. 97—101.

Style of Scriptures, adapted to every capacity, XXI. 180. Vindication of it from the objection, that they do not excel all other men's works, 344—347.

SUBJECTION.

1. *Subjection to God*, as supreme Governor, duty of, II. 207—209. Directions for attaining to it, 209—220. Christianity the greatest bond of subjection, VI. 87—91.
2. *Subjection to Christ*, nature of, XVII. 384. The only way to escape the wrath of God, and why, 385, 386. No power can save him who withholds subjection to Christ, 387. Exhortation to this duty, 394—396. Aggravations of the sin of neglecting it, 396—399. And of its punishment, 399—407.

Subjects, duties of, to civil rulers, VI. 22—103; XIX. 500. Holiness makes the most loyal and obedient subjects, X. 191—194.

Subscription to the whole Scriptures, how far sufficient, V. 532. Lawfulness of subscription to church-confessions, 541.

Succession, uninterrupted, either of right, ordination, or of conveyance by jurisdiction, whether necessary to the being of the ministry and of a true church, V. 276—279.

Sufferings of Christ, explained, XIX. 73—76. And vindicated from objections, XXI. 337—344. The saint's rest, a rest from suffering, XXII. 143. And from all personal sufferings at the hand of God, 163—166. The most powerful supports under suffering, afforded by Christianity, XXI. 179. The sufferings to which Christians are exposed, no just ground of objection, 375—377.

Suicide, causes of, VI. 138, 139. Cautions and advices against it, 139—142.

Suits at law, in what cases to be prosecuted, VI. 163, 164, 377. Various

questions respecting them solved, 378, 379. The evil of contentious and unjust suits, 381. Directions about commencing suits at law, 384—386.

Superiors, sinfulness of reproachful speeches against, when we suffer for religion's sake, XVII. 80—85.

Supremacy, oath of may be lawfully taken, VI. 54, 55. And without confounding church and state, 55.

Suspension from the Lord's supper, whether lawful, V. 408—410. The remedy of a person who is injuriously suspended, 406.

Swearing, defined, III. 490. In what cases lawful, 491. How far the swearer's intent is necessary to the being of an oath, 491, 492. How far the swearing by creatures is a sin, 493. It is not unlawful to lay hands on the book and kiss it in swearing, 494—496. Objections to this, answered, 496—500. Whether one that scruples swearing himself, may, when commissioned, give an oath to another who has no scruples, 501. When God's name is taken in vain, in swearing, 501, 502. Directions for avoiding profane swearing, 502—507.

Swiftness of time, a motive for redeeming it, III. 134.

Symbols and badges of idolatry, or of any error or sect, whether lawful to be used, V. 486, 487.

Synods, by whom to be convened, V. 463, 464.

T.

TABLE, not to be made a snare or temptation to ourselves or others, III. 392—394.

Talk, idle, defined, III. 534—536. A sinful waster of time, III. 164, 165. Various kinds of idle talk, 537—539. Its aggravations, 539—543. Mischiefs resulting from it, 543—546. Special directions against it, 546—552.

Talkativeness, a sign of pride, III. 40.

Taste, directions for the government of, III. 369—436. The pleasures of taste must be denied, XI. 159—163.

Teacher, an office of Jesus Christ, II. 222. Directions for learning of him, 222—233.

Teachers, to be cautiously chosen, II. 145—147.

Teaching, right, of children and servants, directions for, IV. 270—281. The grand difference between the teaching of Christ and that of other men, XV. 148.

Tempers of the body, filled with temptations by the devil, II. 277. Remedy for such temptations, *ib.*, 278.

Temples, whether holy, and what reverence is due to them, V. 569, 570.

Temptation defined, XIX. 154. God leads no man into temptation, though he permits temptations to befall us, 155. Import of the petition against temptation in the Lord's prayer, 155, 156. No sin in itself, but the yielding to it, III. 233. The temptations whereby the devil endeavours to hinder the conversion of men, stated, with their remedies, II. 62—86. Temptation to be avoided, 216. Our duty when unavoidably cast upon strong temptation, *ib.* 217. Temptations by Satan to particular sins, with directions for preservation and remedy, 276—284. His temptations to draw us off from duty, 309—324. And to frustrate holy duties, and render them ineffectual, 314—320. Temptations to which the poor are specially liable, IV. 383—386. The temptations of the rich, 393, 394. Temptations of Satan in the time of sickness, and how they are to be resisted, 443—448. The special temptations of the godly, 414—416. The living among strong temptations to sin, a hinderance of conversion, 291, 292. Arguments and helps to patience under the temptations of Satan, XI. 448—450. Particularly temptations to despair, 450—460. Self-ignorance makes men run into temptations, XVI. 45. And makes temptations prevalent, 46. Temptations, a proof of the immortality of the soul, XVIII. 285. And of the existence of the devil, XXII. 319, 320. And of a future state of retribution, XXI. 90—92. The saint's rest a rest from the temptations of Satan, 145—147. And from the temptations of the world and the flesh, 147—149. Christianity fortifies the mind against temptations, XXI. 178.

Tenants, cases of conscience respecting the conduct of landlords towards, VI. 357—363. Helps to patience under bad tenants, XI. 442.

Tenderness of ourselves, unreasonable, a hinderance of self-acquaintance, XVI. 267—269. Its remedy, 269, 270.

Terms of the Christian covenant, V. 41, 42.

Terribleness of God, and the effects of the knowledge thereof, XIII. 151—154.
Tertullian, testimony of, to the observance of the Lord's Day, XIII. 389.
Testament. See *Old Testament*, *New Testament*.
Testimony (Human), the certainty and credibility of, to the truth of miracles, XXII. 273—281. The belief of miracles upon human testimony, not a resolution of our faith into the testimony of man, 289—294. The necessity of such testimony, 294—298. Credibility of the testimony of the Apostles and Evangelists, XVIII. 436—443. Vindication of human testimony, XXII. 225—235.
Testimony of the Spirit, what it is, and who have it, XX. 49, 50. It is a sufficient proof of the truth of the Gospel, XX. 9. Use of the doctrine of the Spirit's testimony to convince the doubtful of the truth of Christianity, 22—27.
Testimony of a holy life, comfort of, IV. 428, 429.
Testimonies of God, what is meant by, XVIII. 91. What there is in them which make them fit to be our heritage and joy, 93—97. How they are "our heritage for ever," 97. What it is for believers to take God's testimonies for their heritage, *ib.* How far they are their joy, 98—100.
Thales, sayings of, II. 173 *note* c.
Thankfulness to God, duty of, II. 421. True thankfulness distinguished from counterfeits, 422. Directions for thankfulness to God, our benefactor, 423—434.
Thanksgiving to the God of our salvation, the pleasures of, X. 312—316. Self-acquaintance necessary to the giving of thanks aright, XVI. 93—96. Forms of thanksgiving for persons restored from dangerous sickness, XV. 502, 503. For women safely delivered in child-bearing, 503, 504. And for a penitent member restored to church communion, 515, 516.
Thanksgiving Days, by whom to be appointed, V. 464, 465. On the proper mode of celebrating them, XV. 498, 499.
Theft, or injurious getting and receiving, what, VI. 273, 274. General directions against, 274—278. Whether a man may steal in absolute necessity, merely to save his life, 279—281. Whether, if another be bound to afford relief, and do not, a man may take it, though it be not for the immediate saving of life, 281, 282. Whether, if another take by theft or force, a man may take his own again, by force or secretly, when he has no other way, 282. Various other cases of conscience respecting theft, 283—286. Explanation of the eighth commandment respecting theft, XIX. 226—236.
Theological conclusions, uncertainty of, XV. 50, 51.
Thief, a promise of concealment made to, how far obligatory, VI. 297, 298.
Thorn in the flesh, import of the phrase, XVIII. 173, 174. Practical uses to be derived from it, 174—179.
Thought, sins of, to be guarded against, II. 532. Vain and ungoverned thoughts, a sinful waster of time, III. 166. What are evil and idle thoughts, 172, 173. Directions against them, 173—181. For furnishing the mind with good thoughts, 181—198. And for rendering good thoughts effectual, 198—211. Blasphemous or disturbing thoughts to be instantly rejected by melancholy persons, 229. Directions to students for the regulation of their studying thoughts, 238—256. Necessity of keeping the thoughts in constant subjection, VIII. 359—361. Ten queries, evincing the necessity of exercising our thoughts upon God, XIII. 204—206. Ten mischiefs which befal those who have not God in all their thoughts, 207—213. Twelve proofs of the regardableness of our thoughts, 223—228.
Threatenings of God, faith how to be exercised on, XII. 287—296. The necessity of God's executing his threatenings explained, XX. xvi.—xviii.
Thriving in the world, temptations incident to, II. 280. How the delight of thriving must be denied, XI. 201—204.
Time, defined, III. 120. What it is to redeem time, 121, 122. Why it is to be redeemed, 122, 123. The price with which it is to be redeemed, 123, 124. Directions, *contemplative*, for redeeming time:—It is absolutely necessary, 124—127. The necessity of knowing the state of our souls, 127—129. The comfortable review of time redeemed, and the sad review of ill-spent time, 129—132. We shall be judged for mis-spent time, 133. The recollection of time already lost, 133, 134. The swiftness of time, 134, 135. The proximity of eternity, 135. The uncertainty of time, 136, 137. Our waste of time

noted by God, 137, 138. The ends for which life and time are given, to be considered, 138. The time of this life our only season of preparation for eternity, 139. Other contemplative motives for redeeming time, 140—143. *Practical* directions for redeeming time, 148—156. Time-wasters to be carefully watched, 156—168. On whom the duty of redeeming time is specially incumbent, 168—171. The value of time to be impressed upon children, 186, 187. Address on the importance and necessity of the redemption of time, XIII. 517—534.

Tippling, a sinful waster of time, III. 159. Distinction between tippling and drunkenness, 401—403. Causes of it, 403—406. Practical directions against it, 430—436.

Tongue, uses of, III. 472—474; XI. 171. Particularly as an instrument for praising God, III. 473, 474. Directions for praising God with our tongues, II. 438—448. Its duties, III. 475. Thirty sins which may be committed by it, 476—483. Fifteen directions for avoiding them, and for regulating the tongue, 483—490. A new tongue, the consequence of a new heart, VII. 111—114.

Tongue, sins of, against piety, XVII. 62. And against justice and charity, 63. Particularly those of reproaching fellow Christians for differences in religion, 63. The aggravation of their sin, who deride, scorn, revile, or oppose serious religion, 64—69. Particularly of those who uncharitably reproach one another for lesser differences in religion, 69—72.

Torments of the damned, greatness of, XXII. 415—437.

Trades, what sinful ones are not to be followed, X. 428, 429.

Tradesmen, whether they may carry on trade with borrowed money, VI. 316, 317.

Tradition, difference between the Protestants and Papists on the subject of, V. 131; XX. 92, 93. The essentials of Scripture known without tradition, V. 530. How it may contribute to salvation, 533, 534. How far to be used and trusted in, 536, 537. Does not favour popery, XVIII. 443. The certainty of the tradition of the Scriptures to us proved, XX. 15—20.

Transfiguration of Christ, what sensible manifestation of his kingdom was given in, by him, XVIII. 462—467. The circumstances of the appearance of Elias and Moses there, considered, 467—470. Of what things they conversed, 470—477. Design of their appearance, 477, 478. The preparatory circumstances of the transfiguration, 478. The conduct of the Apostles who were admitted to behold it, 479—492. Import of the command to hear Christ, 493—496. The vision, why shown only to three of his disciples, 496. And why it was not announced by them until after the resurrection, 497, 498. Practical application of the subject, 498—502.

Transubstantiation, contrary to sense, XV. 37. Romish doctrine of, refuted, XIX. 275—277.

Travel into foreign countries, as a branch of education, how far lawful, IV. 185, 186. Dangers of young gentlemen travelling abroad, especially in popish countries, VI. 338—344. Directions to travellers in foreign lands, 344—348.

Trifling in the things of God, caution against, II. 544—548.

Trinity, doctrine of, explained, XIX. 62—64. Involves no contradiction, XX. 439. Proved to be both credible and intelligible, XXI. 307—313.

Troubles of conscience about our spiritual state, how to live by faith under, XII, 490—505. Time of trouble, the fittest season for meditation, XXIII. 327, 328.

Trust in God, nature of, II. 396. Its contraries, 397. Counterfeits, 397, 398. Uses and benefits, 399. Directions for a quieting and comforting trust in God, 400—408.

Trust in man, inordinate, one of the causes of falsely-pretended knowledge, XV. 154. How are we forbidden to put our trust in man, VI. 413. Who is to be chosen for a matter of trust, 413, 414. Cases of conscience respecting trusts and trustees, 414—419. Directions respecting trusts, 419, 420.

Truth, defined, III. 508. Truth of words, what, XIX. 238. *Logical* truth, what, III. 508. *Moral* truth, explained, 509. We are not bound to make known all that is true, much less to every man that asketh us, 509, 510. Whether we are bound to speak the truth to every one that we answer to, 510. Or to speak all the truth whenever we speak part of it, *ib.* Whether it is always a sin to speak a logical falsehood, that is, disagreeably to the matter in question, 510, 511. Or to speak contrary to our minds, 511. Whether it is a

sin when I speak not a known untruth, nor with a purpose to deceive, *ib.* Or, is this a lie, *ib.* Whether our words must always be true in the proper literal sense, *ib.*, 512. And used in the common sense, or in the hearer's sense, 512. Whether it is lawful to deceive another by true words, 512, 513. Whether I may speak that which I think is true, but am not sure, 533. Directions for the discovery of truth among contenders, V. 134—151. On the knowledge of the truth of God, and its effects, 142—148. The being frightened at the appearance of something in truth, a cause of falsely-pretended knowledge, XV. 157.

Tunes of psalms, of man's invention, may be lawfully used, V. 497—499.

Tutors of youth, counsels to, XV. 390, 391. See *Schoolmasters*.

Types, prophetical, testimony of, to Christ, XXI. 203, 204.

U.

Unbelief, what is commonly so called shown not to be unbelief, IX. 113, 114. What is ordinarily intended by it, II. 495. Is a hinderance of conversion, VII. 270, 271. Directions against it, II. 498—512; VII. 271, 272. Is a main cause of men's slighting Christ and salvation, XVI. 513. Men's sinning against knowledge a cause of unbelief, XXII. 204, 205. Also the seeming contradictions of Scripture, 205—207.

Unbelievers, misery of, XII. 28, 29. Address to them, XXII. 207—211.

Uncleanness, great sinfulness of, III. 436—446. Causes of it, XIX. 222. Directions against it, III. 446—462. And remedies, XIX. 223, 224.

Unconverted, characters of, described, II. 32—34; VII. 22. Design of the 'Call to the Unconverted,' VII. cccxxxii. Address to unsanctified readers of that treatise, cccxxxiii.—cccliii. It is the unchangeable law of God that wicked men must turn or die, 357—378. God has promised that the wicked shall live if they will but turn, 378—383. God takes pleasure in their conversion and salvation, and not in their death and damnation, 383—389. God has confirmed this with an oath, 389—394. And has redoubled his exhortations with vehemency, 394—406. God condescends to reason the case with unconverted sinners, 406—425. If unconverted men finally are condemned, it is owing to themselves, 425—430. Uses flowing from these doctrines, 430—441. The misery of the unconverted, 161. They are not children of God and members of Christ, *ib.* 162, 164. They have no hope of salvation until they are converted, 164—167. While unconverted they have no sin pardoned, 166—170. So long as they are unconverted they are Satan's slaves, 170—174. They cannot please God, 174—181. They are in continual danger of hell, 181, 182. They have no ground for one hour's true peace or comfort, 182—184. Their many warnings will multiply their misery, 184—186. The further men go on in an unconverted state the worse they become, 186, 187. They lose a life of blessedness which they might have, 187, 188. Their great danger, II. 36—40. Directions to the unconverted for the attaining of saving grace, 5—88. Ten directions for those unconverted persons who had rather turn than die, VII. 447—452. Directions how, by faith, to order our affections to the unconverted world, XII. 521—525. The various excuses of the unconverted stated and refuted, XIX. 355—394. A prayer for them when convinced of their miserable state, 618—623.

Understanding, diseases of, II. 235. How far they may be called sins, *ib.* 236—238. Signs of a proud self-conceited understanding, XV. 107—113. Evils of it, 113—120. Advantages of a humble understanding, 120—122. The little knowledge that is in the world a motive to a due distrust of our understandings, 128—139.

Ungodly men are incompetent judges of the matters of the Christian faith, XX. 201, 202. The difference between them and the godly, an evidence of the truth of the Scriptures, II. 499, *note*. Directions to the friends of the ungodly how to converse with them in sickness, IV. 446—449. Form of an exhortation to them, 452—464. Disadvantages under which the ungodly labour in judging of holy worship, V. 21. Their dishonesty proved, X. 230—244. And their baseness, 291—295. How little reason they have to boast of their learning or knowledge, XV. 223—224. Why they hate holiness and not learning, 225—227. Motives to the ungodly to cultivate self-

acquaintance, XVI. 224—229. Ungodly men proved to be the greatest impediments to Christianity, 391—403. And the sink of all errors, 403. Their danger illustrated, 404. The misery of the ungodly in losing the rest which remaineth for the people of God, XXII. 361—365. The greatness of their loss, 365—371. Its aggravations, 371—395. They lose all things that are comfortable as well as heaven, 395—415. The greatness of their torments, 415—437. Address to them, persuading them to seek this rest, 437—446. Their friends bound to persuade them to seek it, XXIII. 117.

Union to Christ, one of the benefits of conversion, VII. 193—195.

UNITY.

I. *Unity* and indivisibility of God proved, XX. 478. The knowledge thereof, and its effects, XIII. 24—28.

II. *Unity*, or *Union*, among believers, importance of cultivating it, II. 118, 119, 122, 123.

1. *Its nature*:—In what the unity of saints consists, V. 152, 153; XXI. 403. Points of union among all real Christians, V. 155; XVI. 293—299. What degree of diversity may exist without dissolving this unity, V. 155, 156. Texts of Scripture enforcing unity, 169, 170. Its benefits, 170—175. Nothing to be made essential to unity which God has not made necessary, 188. Perfect unity, why not to be expected upon earth, XVI. 329, 330.

2. *Hinderances to Unity*:—The want of a peaceable spirit even when men are extolling peace, XVI. 331—334. The setting up of a false centre, and building peace upon grounds that will not bear it, 334, 335. The building our union on insufficient means, 335—337. Pride and selfishness, 337, 338. The making of every inferior opinion the seat of unity, 339, 340. The abundance of unpeaceable principles which are grown into credit in the world, 340, 341. Carnal zeal in matters of religion, 341—342. Want of skill to promote unity in those who are desirous of it, 342, 343. The princes of the earth are commonly so bad as to be either strangers to the true interests of Christ and of his church, or else to prefer their own before it, 343. The aversion of the multitude to holy unity and peace, 343, 344. The small number of peace-makers even among the godly, 344. The wiles of the devil in sowing contention between ministers and people, 344—346. The living among and hearkening to schismatical persons, 346. The unworthy privacy and retiredness of Christians, *ib.* The misunderstanding of those texts of Scripture which call for separation from the world, 347. The looking at carnal means, 348. The great weaknesses and miscarriages of professors of godliness, *ib.* 349. The ungodliness of professing Christians, 349.

3. *Means of promoting this Unity*, XXI. 403, 404.

4. *Exhortation to cultivate this Union* by cherishing a catholic love to all Christians, XVI. 361—365. And compassion towards a Christian as a Christian, in his sufferings, 365. Also a special care of the common Christian state and cause, and of the case all our brethren who are known to us, 366. By promoting catholic endeavours for the good of all the members of the church, 366—368. And by laying the unity of the church upon nothing but what is essential, 368, 369.

III. *Unity* (Catholic), briefly defined, XVI. 383. Its nature explained, 384. No Christian unity but in God, as our Father, and the centre of unity, 385. And in Christ the Redeemer, and head of the church, *ib.* 386. No unity between the world and the sanctified believer, 386. No possibility of unity with those who have not the same ultimate, principal end, *ib.* 387. No unity to be had but in the Gospel, 387, 388. No Christian unity but in the Christian nature, 388. Nor where the affections run contrary ways, or are moved by contrary objects, *ib.* And live by contrary laws, *ib.* No unity but in covenant with Christ, 389. True members of the church are built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, 389. No Christian unity without special love to the saints, *ib.* And to the body with which we are united, *ib.* Nor without a singular respect to the special members of the church, and an inclination to the communion of saints, and love to the ordinances of the church, 390. We must work in the same vineyard, and walk in the same employment, as the sanctified do, *ib.* No unity unless we join in opposition to that which

would tend to our destruction, *ib.* No unity with believers in glory without unity in the state and kingdom of grace, 391. The ungodly proved to be the greatest hinderance of unity, 391—403. Heads of a treaty of unity proposed to them, 412—425. Points of unity in which all are agreed, 425—429. Motives persuading to unity, 430—444. Address to the godly to maintain Christian unity, 445. Answer to the objection, that a profession of the same faith may procure sufficient unity though all be not saints or savingly regenerate, 445, 446. Such a unity not Christian unity, 447. Nor productive of peace, 448. Experience proves that the greatest persecutors of the godly have been men professing the same religion with them, 449. Such a bare profession affords but little benefit, 450. But is rather productive of sorrows, 450, 451. Such a union affords but small hope of salvation to the unconverted, 452. It only enables the ungodly to do more mischief, 452. And to dishonour Christ more than if they were open enemies, 453. It will not satisfy Christ, 457. And will be but a short agreement, *ib.* Advantage of union in holiness and in the essentials of Christianity, in healing differences, 458. And leading to heaven, 459. In promoting growth in grace, 460. Preserving us from heresy, *ib.* From scandalous sins, *ib.* 461. In putting an end to contentions, 462. Promoting peace, *ib.* Destroying carnal, selfish dispositions, 463. Subduing pride, 464. Freeing us from that uncharitableness which causes disagreements, 465, 466. Were all united in the Spirit, they would have but one God and one object of faith, 466. And one light for terminating differences, 467. They would all have the use and benefit of all the reconciling means and ordinances of God, 467—469. Would manage all differences in a holy manner, 469. Would be under the promise of divine assistance, 470. The great truths in which we are agreed would direct to find out in what we differ, and take us off from vain contendings, 470. The forethought of an everlasting union in heaven would tend to heal breaches, 471. And promote a love to truth and peace, 471, 472. The sanctified having hearts subject to the truth, an advantage for agreement, 472, 473. The advantages of a tender conscience to such agreement, 473, 474. Such catholic unity in the Spirit and in a holy life, productive of mutual forbearance, 475. The promise of heaven and of support till we get there, a further encouragement to unity, 475, 476. Address to the godly, recommending catholic unity, 483, 484. Proofs that it is the will of God that the unity of the church should not be laid upon indifferent, small, and doubtful points, 488—500. Practical uses of this doctrine, 500—506.

Universities, compassionate counsels addressed to young students in, XV. 353—380.

Unmercifulness to the needy, directions how to overcome by faith, XII. 478—490.

Unpardonable Sin. See *Sin against the Holy Ghost.*

Unregenerate, who are certainly such, XVI. 163—167.

Unresolvedness, a hinderance to conversion, VII. 298. Exhortation against it, 299.

Unrenewed souls, why faithful ministers speak so hardly of, XVI. 147—158. Questions addressed to them, 158—160.

Unthankfulness, caused by self-ignorance, XVI. 53.

Uprightness of heart and life defined, VI. 3. The blessings of uprightness to others, 4. And to the upright themselves, 5, 6. Rules for an upright life, 6—13.

Usurper, oath imposed by, how far binding, V. 87. Whether we may lawfully swear obedience in all things lawful and honest to usurpers, 541, 542.

Usury, what may be considered as lawful, VI. 319—325. In what cases it is sinful, 325—328; XIX. 229—232.

V.

Value of commodities, how to be estimated, VI. 307, 308.

Ventriloquism, ascribed to satanic enmity, XX. 272.

Veracity of God, and the effects of the saving knowledge thereof, XIII. 142—148.

Visibility of the catholic church, whether it exist, and what it is, V. 281; XIX. 95, 141. What constitutes a visible member of such a

church, V. 282. And what is necessary to prove a man such a member of the universal visible church, 282—285.

Visits, what are unlawful, VI. 365. Visiting the sick, an important part of ministerial duty, XIV. 101—104.

Visitation of the sick, form of, XV. 497. See *Sick*.

Vocation, difference between it and conversion, VII. 18, 19. Common and special, what, 19.

Voluptuousness. See *Sensuality*.

Vow, nature of, V. 54, 55. Its reason and use, 55, 56. The obligation of vows, 56, 57. What may be the subject matter of a vow, 57. In what cases a real vow must not be kept, 91—94. Vows not to be made in a passion, 58. Whether any things be indifferent, and, as such, may be the subject of a vow, 58—61. Whether we may vow things in themselves indifferent, though not in their circumstances, 61, 62. Requisites to make a vow lawful, 62. Directions for this purpose, 63—65. In what cases persons under government may not lawfully vow without the governor's consent, 65. What is to be done, if the party doubt about the lawfulness of a vow, 66—68. Directions for the keeping of vows, 69—106.

Vows of chastity, not easily to be dispensed with, IV. 11, 12. Whether it be lawful to break them and to marry, 36—38.

W.

WAGERS, whether they may lawfully be laid, VI. 328, 329; XIX. 228, 229.

Wakes, what judgment to be formed of, III. 622.

Walking with God, what it is, briefly defined, XIII. 155, 156. More particularly,

1. *As to the matter* of it, walking with God includes a practical acknowledgment of his attributes, XIII. 156, 157. Our reconciliation to him, 157, 158. Our esteeming him supremely, 158—160. Our subjection to him, 160, 161. That we fear no punishment like his threatened displeasure, 161, 162. That from him is our ful. reward, 162, 163. That we take his promise for our security for that reward, 163. To live as in his presence, 164. That we see him in his creatures and in his providence, 165. Our willing attendance on his appointed means of grace, 166—174. Our dependence upon him for all our mercies, 174. That the great business of our lives be with him and for him, 175.
2. *As to the manner* of walking with God;—it must be with the greatest reverence, XIII. 176. With humble boldness and familiarity, *ib.*, 177. And with some holy pleasure and delight, 177, 178. With industry and diligence, 178, 179. With constancy, 179.
3. *The uses of* this doctrine of walking with God:—*First*, A lamentation of the practical atheism that is in the world, XIII. 180—223. *Secondly*, An application to the godly, and the benefits of walking with God, 229. It is the employment most suitable to human nature, 229—240. It is incomparably the highest and noblest life, 240—246. It is the only course which can prove and make men truly wise, 246. He who walks with God, begins aright and on a sure foundation, 247, 248. He has fixed on a right end, which he daily prosecutes, 248—250. He has an experimental knowledge of these things, 250, 251. He has an infallible rule to walk by, 251—254. He is the most considerate person, and has great advantage to be wise, 254, 255. Walking with God, fixes the mind, and keeps it from diversions and vagaries, 255, 256. He who walks with God has the great master-truths in his heart, which are the standard of the rest, 256. It takes off the vizor of deluding things, 256, 257. It helps us against the deceit of our own hearts, 257. They who walk with God, are entitled, by many promises, to the guidance and direction of his Spirit, 258. Walking with God makes men good as well as wise, and it advances to the greatest holiness and rectitude, 258—262. And it is the best preparation for sufferings and death, 262—268.
4. *Motives* to true believers to walk with God.—If they are true Christians, their relations engage them to it, XIII. 269—272. By their covenant profession, they have resigned themselves to God alone, 272—274. They are bound, because they have tasted the safety and sweetness of walking with God, 274—277. Walking with God is the necessary prosecution of their choice and hopes of life eternal, 277—279. God purposely provides them hard entertainment in the world, that they may have none to walk with

but himself, with comfort and content, 279—282.
5. *Seventeen general directions* for walking with God, in a life of faith and holiness, II. 170—458.
Walking in Christ, explained, VIII. 270.
Wanton discourse, songs, &c., must be denied, XI. 165—168.
Wants of the soul, to be meditated upon, III. 188—190.
War, in what case lawful, VI. 472.
Warfare, Christians to spend all their days in, II. 258. The enemies they have to encounter, 258—262. Their offensive arms, 262, 263. And defensive arms, 263. The matter or grounds of Satan's temptations in this warfare, 263—265. His principal succours and auxiliaries, 265—268. Officers and instruments, 268—274. Christ's contrary methods against him, 274—276. See also *Conflict*.
Wastefulness, sinful. See *Prodigality*.
Weak Christian, character of, as to his faith, VIII. 384. His knowledge of the reasons of his religion, 385. The imperfection of his knowledge, 386. His fear of punishment, 389. His love of God, 391. His exercises of love and praise are feeble, 393. The operations of faith are languid, 394. He learns but little, 395. His deliverances from sin are imperfect, 397. He receives reproofs with an ill grace, 398. His desires after perfection are languid, 400. His thoughts of heaven are dull, 401. He is impeded in the way of obedience by little difficulties, 402. Too great a measure of selfishness remains in him, 406. The remains of concupiscence and sensuality make mortification difficult, 409. His value of the means of spiritual benefit, 410. The world retains a greater interest in his heart, 412. In particular actions he is often impeded, 414. His esteem of God is weak, 416. He is too often looking aside, 418. Is subject to frequent struggles of the flesh against the spirit, 419. Has but little spiritual delight, 421—423. Has so small a degree of grace, that he rarely attains any well-grounded assurance till he attains a greater measure of grace, 425. Is most obedient when most in fear of hell, 426. Though pride does not reign in him, yet it foully blemishes him, 428. Is not duly prepared for spiritual conflict, 429. Does not forsake all for Christ with alacrity, 431, 432. Falls if his teacher or more esteemed company fall, 433. Is hardly put to it, when he meets with difficult passages of Scripture, 434. Is hindered in duty through the narrowness and weakness of his mind, 435. Has more of self and less of God in his solitude, 436. His trust in God is imperfect, 436. Is partial and selfish in judging of others, 437, 438. Imperfectly governs his thoughts, 439. His passions, 440. And his tongue, 441. His discourse is more about externals, 443. Places too much of his religion in controversies, 445. Does not sufficiently value time, 448. Is less profitable to the world than the confirmed Christian, 449. His love to his neighbour is weak, 450. And also his love to the godly, 451. Does not easily and fully forgive an enemy, 453. Has more selfishness and partiality than confirmed Christians, 455. Is weak in social and relative duties, 456. Is less patient and submissive amidst conflicting claims of rulers, 461. Is fearful in dangers, 462. Either hearkens too much to carnal wisdom, or is confident in his mistakes, 465. Is more ready to censure others than to bear censure himself, 467. Is more prone to divisions and separations than a stronger Christian is, 471—474. Is too easily tempted to be a divider of the church, by expecting it to be united upon his own terms, 478, 479. Is too easily tempted into religious passions and disputations, 482, 483. Is liable to be tempted into wrangling censoriousness against his teachers, 490. Has not judgment enough to understand the dealings of God, 491. Places his religion in the more affectionate and expressive part, 492. Though he had rather come to God by death and judgment, yet he has no great comfort at present, 496, 497. How weak Christians are to be received, but not to doubtful disputations, XVI. 485, 486. Necessity of weak Christians seeking stability, confirmation, and increase of grace, VIII. 271—275. Motives to convince them of their need of growth and confirmation, 275—320. Directions for their confirmation in a state of grace, 321—370. Other directions to weak persons, IV. 396—403.
Weaknesses of the soul, to be meditated upon, III. 188—190.
Week-Days, names of, designated by idolatrous days, whether they may be retained, V. 489, 490. Directions for spending them profitably, IV. 230-239.

White Garments, the wearing of, at baptism, origin of, V. 366. Its design, 367. Whether lawful to us, 369.

Wicked, who they are, VII. 363—365. In what respects their prayers are an abomination to the Lord, IX. 49. Their sentence at the last judgment, XVII. 481—489. An appeal to them to turn and live :—See *Unconverted*.

Will of God, what is intended in the Lord's prayer, XIX. 145. How it is to be done on earth, *ib*. As it is in heaven, 146, 147.

Will, (human,) liberty of, what, II. 235. How the will of man may be guilty of the ignorance of the understanding, 237. The diseases of the will, and how far they are sin, 238—241. The change of the will, in conversion, described, VII. 32—98.

Wisdom of God delineated, as displayed in Christianity, XII. 103—112. The infinite wisdom of God proved, XX. 478—480. On the saving knowledge thereof, and its effects, XIII. 63—71.

Wisdom (Worldly,) what, is condemned by St. Paul in 1 Cor. viii. 2, 3; XV. 9—16, 19—32. What wisdom is not condemned by him, 17—19.

Witches, existence of, a proof of the immateriality of the soul, XVIII. 284. The devil's contracts with them, a proof of the reality of his existence, XXI. 87; XXII. 327—329. The enmity of Satan proved by histories of his transactions with witches, XX. 255—271.

Witness of Christ within us, what it is, XX. 134—137.

Witness of the Spirit, what it is, and who have it, IX. 53—59; XX. 49, 50. It is a sufficient proof of the truth of the Gospel, XX. 9. Use of the doctrine of the Spirit's witness, to convince the doubtful of the truth of Christianity, 22—27. The reasons why all true believers shall have the witness in themselves, 137—139. Their advantage against temptations to infidelity, 139—140. How great a mercy this is, 141—143. Answer to the objections—'I find not this witness in me,' 146—149. That so many pretend to the Spirit that I can believe none of them, 149—151. How we may know, when so many pretend to the Spirit, which of them has it and which not, 151, 152. How we may know whether and when we have the Spirit of Christ, 153, 154. How a Christian should make use of the witness of the Spirit within them, for resisting temptations to unbelief, 155—165. Answers to the objections:—That all this is but your own prejudice, of which a Turk may boast in his own religion, 165—167. That it is not the truth of the Gospel, but your belief of it, that makes all these impressions on you, 167, 168. What need have you of a testimony within, if you can see such evidence in the word without you, 168—170. Does not that want evidence which a reasonable man cannot believe, 170, 171. That we scorn to prove the Scripture true because we believe in it, whereas we should believe it because it is true, 171, 172. The proper use of the witness within us, 172. Answer to the question, What need we make use of Scripture or ministers, if we have the witness in ourselves, 172—178. Whether he is not most likely to be in the right, in particular controversies, who has most of the Spirit, 178—180. What advantage it is to have the Spirit in cases of particular temptations and controversies, 180—182. Importance of human learning, notwithstanding the witness and helps of the Spirit, 183—198. The witness of the Spirit in regeneration, XXI, 219—231. Proofs that this is the work of God alone, 231—235. And not the effect of fantasy, 235—237. Refutation of objections drawn from the alleged misconduct of professing Christians, 237—239.

Witnesses, heavenly and earthly, testimony of, explained, XX. 131—134.

———, human, when bound to speak the truth, VI. 380. The evil of false witnesses, 382. And sinfulness, XIX. 243.

Wives, special duties of, to their husbands, IV. 145; XIX. 209, 496, 497. To live and obey them, IV. 145. To learn of them, and amend the faults of which they reprove their wives, 146. To honour them according to their superiority, 146, 147. To be content with their conditions, and subdue their passions, 147. To avoid a proud contentious temper, *ib*. Not to affect showy or costly apparel, 148. To be careful in the government of their tongues, 149. To be diligent in the family, 150. How far a wife may give without her husband's consent, 150, 151. What propriety she has, 151. Her duty, where her husband lives upon unlawful gain, 152. How far she is bound to accuse her husband, to the hazard of his life or

estate, 152, 153. Whether she may go to hear sermons when her husband forbids her, 153, 154. Whether a wife must proceed to admonish a wicked husband when it makes him worse, 154. What she must do in controverted cases of religion, when her judgment and her husband's differ, 155. How long, or in what cases, husbands and wives may be absent from each other, 155, 156. Whether the bare command of princes may separate them, 156, 157. Whether ministers may leave their wives to go abroad and preach the Gospel, 157, 158. Whether a man may leave his wife, in case of personal persecution or danger, 158. Whether the wife may depart from the husband, without a public legal divorce or license, 161, 162. Does the desertion of one party disoblige the other, 163. Must a wife follow a malignant husband that goeth from the means of grace, 163, 164. Must she follow him, if it be but to poverty or beggary, 164, 165. What is to be done in case of the known intention of one to murder the other, 165. Or if there be a fixed hatred of each other, 166. Or if a man will not suffer his wife to hear, read, or pray, or beat her so as to unfit her for her duty, *ib.* 167. See *Divorce, Husbands*, I.

Women, baptism by, whether lawful in cases of necessity, V. 364.

Worcester (city), dedication of a sermon to the mayor and inhabitants of, XVII. 515—521.

Word of God. See *Scriptures.*

Works, what, glorify God, XVII. 195, 196. How Christians glorify God by their works, 192—194. The description of one who glorifies God by his works, 196—227. See *Good Works.*

Works of the law, what are such, XX. 5.

World, the non-eternity of, proved, XX. 471; XXI. 498—515. Contemplation of the world, a mean of promoting love to God, II. 375—378. And a preventive of idle thoughts, III. 191, 192. Eight signs by which we may know whether the world or God be our end, IX. 416—425. Directions how, by faith, to order our affections to the unconverted world, XII. 521—525. The difference between this world and the perfection of that to which the believer is going, XVIII. 450—454. The infinite wisdom of God displayed in the world, XX. 479, 480. Of the present sinful and miserable state of this world, XXI. 116—121. Its actual agreement with the representation made of it in Scripture, as a world of sin, 182—187. Of temptation, 187, 188. And of calamity, 189. See *Crucifying of the World.*

Worldliness, or *Worldly-mindedness*, defined, III. 70. Its great sinfulness, 71, 72. Signs of it, 72—74. What counterfeits of the contrary nature hide this sin from the eyes of worldlings, 74—77. Directions and cautions against it, 79—94. The sin of worldlings opened and pressed, IX. 435—456. Their folly, 464—474.

Worship of God, defined, IV. 48, 49. What it is to worship Him aright, V. 2, 3. Its true ends and reasons, 3—6. The public worship of God, a mean of grace and salvation, II. 48, 49. General directions respecting the worship of God, V. 6—18. Special directions concerning the manner of worship, 18—38. Preparations for public worship, 215. Directions for our behaviour during divine worship, 216—223. And after it, 222. Does presence always make us guilty of the errors or faults of the pastor in God's worship, or the church, 407. Whether the people may bear a vocal part in worship, or only say 'Amen,' 433—438. The fittest gestures for public worship considered, 441, 442. Whether any and what religious worship may be given to creatures, 468—472. Who are to be deemed sincere worshippers of God, VI. 401. Brief directions how to live by faith in the public worship of God, XII. 505—513. See *Family-Worship.*

Wrath, sinful, defined, III. 290, 291. Directions against it, meditative and practical, 291—299. Considerations against it, VI. 142—153.

Wrath of God, XVII. 385. Its dreadful nature, 399—403.

Y.

Young Christians, directions to, for their establishment and safe-proceeding in religion, II. 89—169. Are not to rest in their first beginnings, 102, 103.

Young men, compassionate counsel to, XV. 299. Unspeakable importance to themselves of their early beginning to live to God, 300—304. And also to others, 304—308. How it standeth with our young men, in matter of fact, 308—311. Various corruptions

which carry them away, 312—316. Reflections on this case, 316—325. Undeniable reasons for repentance and amendment of life in those who have hitherto lived an ungodly life, 329—341. General directions to the willing, 341—353. Additional counsel to young men who are bred up to learning, especially to the sacred ministry in the universities and schools, 353. Importance of their case and condition, as they prove good or bad, 354—370. Their danger and their remedy, 370—380. Counsel to young students in physic, 380—382. To young students of the law, in London, 383—385. To the sons of the nobility and of magistrates, 385—389. Counsel to parents and tutors of youth, 390, 391. Duties of the young towards their elders, 392—397.

Youth, the fittest season for redeeming time, III. 168, 169. The special duties of youth towards God, IV. 199—203.

Z.

Zeal defined, III. 601. The evil of zeal without judgment, II. 95, 96. Effects of consuming zeal, 131, *note*. Different kinds of false zeal, III. 601—603. Signs of holy zeal, 603, 604. Its excellency, 604—608. Motives to zeal, 608—611. Directions to excite zeal, 611—613. The danger of contentious zeal, which makes religion a pretext, II. 130, 131. Blind zeal, without knowledge, one of the causes of falsely-pretended knowledge, XV. 154. Carnal zeal, the cause of want of union among believers, XVI. 341, 342.

THE END.

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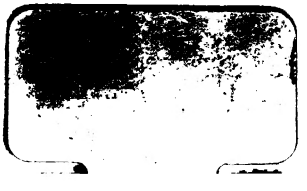
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